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PlayStation[®]2

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-AUSTRALIA

IT'S A MUTANT!

Why *Wolverine's Revenge* is set to become the next X-Rated hit

DRUGS 'N' DISCO

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GTA: Vice City exposed!

TEKKEN 4 Championships

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CLANCY BOY

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HELL FIRE

Reviewed first! Why *Red Faction II* will blast a hole in your life!

COME LAY DA SMACK DOWN

WWE's latest grappler and Brock Lesnar interviewed!

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ISSUE 07 OCTOBER 2002

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07

PlayStation 2



ONIMUSHA 2

Samurai's Destiny

In the year 1560, the warlord Nobunaga, having defeated Imagawa on the battlefield, lost his life by an arrow from an enemy soldier. Yet this wasn't the end of Nobunaga's fate. He was resurrected by the power of demons that reside deep in the underworld and returned to rule with an army of the undead. With Japan on the brink of terror and destruction, a young samurai named Samanosuke appeared and defeated the newly crowned King of the Demons.

However, unbeknownst to all, the nightmare had only just begun.

In the summer of 1573, thirteen years after the original horror, Nobunaga has risen from the underworld once again and started to achieve his old ambition to unify Japan...



- The latest game from the creators of the original Onimusha.
- Enhanced and remodelled sword-moves produce devastating attacks and combinations.
- Depending on the way you play the game, call on other characters to help you defeat the evil Nobunaga and his demon army.
- Involving story line written by Flagship is brought to life by two renowned and respected Japanese film directors.
- Includes some of the most amazing and realistic FMV sequences ever conceived.
- Unique historical setting for Onimusha 2, combined with breathtaking graphics and sound, create a truly epic game that will push the boundaries of game playing to new heights.

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ONIMUSHA 2TM

Samurai's Destiny

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ON THE COVER
Raise hell with this hot new shoot 'em up. *Red Faction II* released.

ISSUE 07 :: OCTOBER 2002

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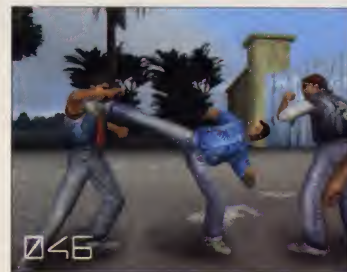
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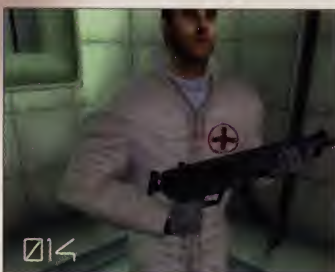
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The wrestling circus has come and gone from our shores, but *OPS2* got all the goss while Brock Lesnar and Co. were in town.

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Gaming heavyweights Activision and comic book giant Marvel reveal what it took to bring X-Men's hirsute and taloned outcast to PS2, cuticles 'n' all.

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This is it. *OPS2* goes on assignment to Miami and comes back with the latest on the biggest game to be released in 2003.

052 TOM CLANCY

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We take the PS2's most anticipated FPS for its first heavy run. See why it's looking on target.

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The prancing horse is one of the most recognisable icons amongst the motoring fraternity and it soon will be joining the gaming family as well!

018 UFC THROWDOWN

Getting the living hell can actually be fun. Or can it?

019 THIS IS SOCCER 2003

TIS '02 is probably the most comprehensive soccer game available. This is set to surpass it and it's looking even better!

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Wesley Snipes' latest movie is the foundation for this fast moving action-adventure.

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Another rally game is set to enter the fray. We stack its chances.





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RICHIE'S TOP 2

GTA: Vice City
(Rockstar) October

I really don't mean to tease you, but
my two big games this month are
still yet to be released. *GTA: Vice City*
is one. The name alone speaks for
itself. Just head over to our big
feature to see exactly what I mean.

Pro Evolution Soccer 2
(Konami) November

I really have been like a kid in a
candy store lately...
When a game as cool and varied as
PES 2 lands in *OPS2 Towers*, it's on
dangerous territory. It's actually a
miracle that any work gets done at
all... anyway, this game is ace.



MIKE'S TOP 2

TEKKEN 4
(Sony) Now

Finally *Tekken 4* is out and I've
taken a copy home to practice my
skillfully planned attacks, readying
myself for the *Australian Tekken 4*
Championships. The trip to London
shall be mine, yes all mine...

AFL 2003

(Acclaim) Now

Skin tight shorts, skimpy singlets
and frolicking about in the park
wrestling blokes and jumping all
over them all in the name of sport
isn't what I'm usually into... BUT
seeing how it's Melbourne's
favourite national pastime I felt
obligated to give it a go.



"With the
general
standard of
games and
technology on
the rise, it's a
crowded
playground for
games
developers..."

EDITOR'S LETTER



Aaah! It's been such a refreshing month here at
OPS2 Towers. With the general standard of games
and technology on the rise, it's a crowded
playground for games developers to actually come
up with something *new* to make people prick their ears and
really sit up and take note. As the games get better, so does
the job.

Right now, the wave of AAA titles is really starting to roll in
and we've had an excellent time getting this issue together.
Yep, being chained down to a desk CAN be fun! Mmmm, kinky.

Just have a quick flip through and we're sure you'll like
what you see. We've covered absolutely loads of stuff and tried
a few new things - way too much to try and start listing here!
Of most note though, we'll nominate just two. We reckon both
Red Faction 2 and *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City* are worth getting
excited about. We hope you like the extra-special *Red Faction*
II cover and the country's first review 'cause it really is worth
making *some* kerfuffle over!

OPS2 has also nabbed exclusive Australian rights to the
Grand Theft Auto: Vice City information that you'll find on page
46. This game is destined for big things - our toughest
challenge by far has just been not letting the cat outta the
bag earlier!

Finally, this issue marks the beginning of 'The Search'. For
what? Australia's *Tekken 4* Champion! *OPS2* is proud to
sponsor a nationwide hunt for a lone fighter (and a mate -
sic!) and fly them to the UK for an International Fight Night
and represent the great land Down Under. Is it going to be
you? Find out more on page 98. And you better go limber
those thumbs up. Enjoy.

Richie Young

RICHIE YOUNG
Editor

GET A FREE GAME!

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PLAYSTATION 2

SUBSCRIBE AND RECEIVE ONE OF THESE HOT GAMES - FREE!

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With an *OPS2* subscription you can get 12 issues at just \$8.33* each. That's a MASSIVE 30% off the cover price!

Every new subscriber will also pick up a FREE Platinum game!

As a special treat, *Official PlayStation Magazine* in conjunction with THQ this month are offering an offer just too good to refuse! Get this - everyone who registers before the closing date will get one of these great games to the left! Turn to page 34 for all the details! *Offer applies to Australian residents only

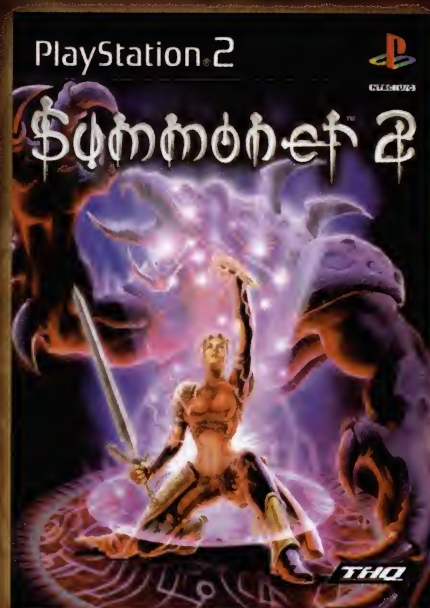
Summoner 2™

Features:

- Battle your enemies in real time with an all-new, party-driven combat system
- Explore over 50 exotic and imaginative 3D locales
- Fulfil Maia's prophecy through an immersive, character-driven story.
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available

Late October



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ON THE DVD

PLAYABLE DEMOS

OTHER MAGAZINES LET YOU WATCH, OPS2 LETS YOU PLAY...

DEMO 02 THE CONTROLS

- L-STICK - MOVE
R-STICK - STRATEGY
- ⊗ ATTACK: PASS
DEFEND: CHANGE
 - ⊙ ATTACK: AIR PASS
DEFEND: TACKLE
 - ⊙ ATTACK: SHOOT
DEFEND: TACKLE
 - Ⓐ ATTACK: THROUGH-BALL
DEFEND: SLIDING TACKLE
 - Ⓜ ATTACK: STEP OVER (HOLD), SPIN (TAP)
DEFEND: ASSIST

DEMO 03 THE CONTROLS

- L-STICK / D-PAD - MOVE
THE GUNSIGHT
- ⊗ MAIN FIRE
 - ⊙ SECONDARY FIRE
 - Ⓜ RELOAD
 - Ⓜ RELOAD

DEMO 04 THE CONTROLS

- L-STICK - DIRECTION/AIM
R-STICK - LOOK
D-PAD - WALK AND AIM
- ⊗ JUMP
 - ⊙ FIRE
 - Ⓜ LIFT/THROW
 - Ⓐ FIRE WEAPON
 - Ⓜ SPEED BURST/SLAM
 - Ⓜ CAMERA VIEW / STRAFE

DEMO 05 THE CONTROLS

- L-STICK - MOVE AROUND OPPONENT
- ⊗ LEFT PUNCH
 - ⊙ RIGHT PUNCH
 - ⊙ KICK ATTACK
 - Ⓐ COMBO ATTACK
 - ↑/↓ JUMP/CROUCH
 - ←/→ TOWARDS/AWAY OPPONENT
 - Ⓜ GRAPPLE
 - Ⓜ SHOVE

DEMO 06 THE CONTROLS

- D-PAD - MOVE
- ⊗ ATTACK
 - ⊙ GUARD
 - Ⓜ GRAPPLE
 - Ⓐ RUN
 - Ⓜ SMACKDOWN! SPECIAL MOVE
 - Ⓜ TAUNT
 - Ⓜ PAUSE

THIS IS SOCCER 2003

PUBLISHER SCEE GAME TYPE FOOTBALL SIM OUT 27 SEPTEMBER PLAYERS 1 - 8

THE GAME Now this really is soccer. It's the second *TIF* for PS2 and its already successful formula has been honed yet further, this time offering such mind-bending features as 13,500 real player names. In addition to this the full leagues from Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Japan, Korea and North America have been added to the already immeasurable rosters from last year.

It's all an effort to make the game as fact-packed as possible. Chances are that if you were to go and kick a ball about in the park right now someone would take your picture and you'd wind up in the game, too.

THE DEMO Welcome to the first two-minute half of a four-minute game of *This Is Soccer 2003*. Just enough time to get a taste of the game's improved controls and admire the faces of the players in the England and Brazil teams. Keep at least one eye peeled for the likes of Rivaldo, Ronaldinho and Owen who show off *TIF*'s new facial modelling system at its best.



NINJA ASSAULT

PUBLISHER SCEE GAME TYPE LIGHTGUN SHOOTER OUT 4 OCTOBER PLAYERS 1

THE GAME More G-Con 2 shooting action from the makers of *Time Crisis 2* and *Vampire Night*. The premise is simple. Point the gun at the TV and shoot bad guys. We won't say how it works (suffice to say black magic is involved) but will say if you've got a G-Con 2 then this is for you.

An evil warlord has captured Princess Koto and now holds her captive. The Princess is the sole survivor of the royal family which holds the power to unseal the mythical Mach Gun. If the Gun is found, the whole world will be enslaved.

THE DEMO This is the second level of the game, set in a snowy graveyard riddled with things just gasping to be shot. Do the right thing and play with a G-Con 2 for an as-its-makers-intended arcade experience or make do with a Dual Shock 2 and move the cursor around the screen with the left stick.

Excellent for a demo, two people can play simultaneously by inserting a second pad. Watch out though! This taster times out after a few minutes!

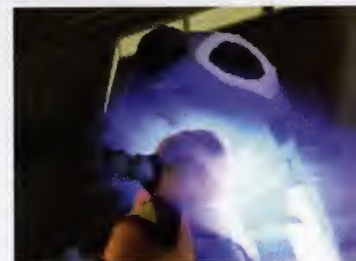


STITCH: EXPERIMENT 626

PUBLISHER SCEE GAME TYPE PLATFORMER OUT NOW PLAYERS 1

THE GAME You may be aware of *Lilo & Stitch*, Disney's new feature starring a hula girl and an alien. Well, this is a third-person shooter based on the story before the film. Rat-faced *Stitch* - the result of an alien experiment gone wrong - escapes to Earth and shacks up with Lilo. In *Experiment 626* we see him helping his creator Jumba collect DNA for further experiments.

THE DEMO Collect DNA samples (the blue double-helix icons and extra-strength red icons) and hit the red circle icons to be contacted by Jumba who will dish out information. A double tap of will enable you to leap wider chasms or get out of deeper pits. Shooting boxes and objects which flash when hit will release power-ups to refresh your body and boost your gunnage. Other than that it's all fairly straightforward. Work your way from the mission start, down through the jungle to the exit.



X-MEN NEXT DIMENSION

PUBLISHER ACTIVISION GAME TYPE BEAT-EM-UP OUT 4 OCTOBER PLAYERS 1 - 2

THE GAME Choose a mutant. Move it this way and that. Hit buttons to flail limbs, and the last person to fall over wins. Nothing to do with the Jackman/Berry/Picard* movie, this is drawn from a pure strain of Marvel-ousness with 24 X-Men to choose from and made to hurt each other. In keeping with its title, the side-on scrapping of the hit PSone games has been expanded into the third dimension with aplomb. *XMND* features huge fully stompable 3D arenas.

THE DEMO Play as Beast or Phoenix. Beast is agile for a man his size and, helpfully, multiple button taps lead into effortless combinations and multi-hits. Phoenix lacks bulk but has speed and, once again, pad hammering is well rewarded. Watch for the build up of your power meter, enabling more powerful moves (Pause and select Moves to see a full list of combos). This demo reloads after each fight, which can take some time.



WWE SMACKDOWN! JUST BRING IT

PUBLISHER THQ GAME TYPE WRESTLING OUT NOW PLAYERS 1 - 2

THE GAME Fresh from its name change after a run-in with panda-fanciers the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), *WWE SmackDown! Just Bring It!* is, despite the change, the same game you were formerly paying \$100 for but will shortly be able to bag for just a fraction of that.

This, the first men-in-pants game for PS2, tops all previous efforts on lesser machines, implementing new Six-Man Tag, Royal Rumble and Nine-Men-In-The-Ring options alongside such favourites as King Of The Ring, Hardcore and Survival.

THE DEMO Exhibition is the only mode that can be selected with this demo, and then you can choose from Tag or Single matches, with all other options unavailable. You may then choose the trunks of Steve Austin (hmm), The Undertaker (brrr), Kane (double brrr) or Kurt Angle (mummy!).

Choose how many special moves you'd like each character to start with and the max they can amass. The leisurely pace will surprise some but the detail is excellent.



This is a lesson from history. You may think that this month's DVD is good. You may be playing the *TimeSplitters 2* demo and saying, "Thank you, Free Radical, for this great demo. Thank you Karl Hilton, David Doak and your staff of genius programmers for this great game. Thank you to absolutely everybody who helped get this demo into my PlayStation 2. Well, as the optician once said (and elsewhere in this hallowed edition), "You ain't seen nothin' yet!"

Time has told me that Christmas is what PlayStation 2 is all about. And right now my stable of elves are fashioning a DVD so big it may not fit inside your PS2. Last year we brought you a DVD with 12 playable demos - this year we're on track to beat that. Anyone else hear Santa chimers?

Official PS2 Magazine will be delivering quality and quantity as summer approaches. So although it may be hot outside, there'll always be a hotter DVD on OPS2. Ha! Until next month.

Richie Young

Editor

PS To use this DVD, load it up on your PS2. Then scroll between games and rolling demos with the ↓ and ↑ keys. To choose within a section use ← and →. Press ⊗ to start up your choice. Please note, you may have to reset your PS2 after some demos.

VIDEO DEMOS

MGS 2: SUBSTANCE

What goes around comes around. Just as *MGS1* spawned its VR Missions so *MGS2* gives birth to Substance. See the game in action and witness Snake in a tuxedo, Snake penetrating parts he couldn't formerly reach, and Snake doing battle with Godzilla-sized VR soldiers. Substantial.

MORTAL KOMBAT: DEADLY ALLIANCE

Once again the beat-'em-up with more claret than the Bordeaux region demands that you 'get over here!' See masked men produce spears from nowhere. See ladies wearing next to nought blow heads clean off. See skulls spirited from a bald demon's hands. Realistic? No. Disturbing? Certainly.

NHL 2003

"Unprecedented puck physics" is the promise. Armoured men on skates is the premise. EA's latest NHL delivers all the impact of 180lbs of rage shoulder-slammings you into sweat-misted Perspex. Ice hockey may be faintly ridiculous, but it makes a cracking game as EA Sports consistently shows us year in year out.

RATCHET & CLANK

See the latest trailer for the game that *Jak And Daxter* wanted to be. There are guns, gadgets and gert big explosions. This video shows off many portions of the adventure ahead and hints at the humour within. Worth viewing for the bit where Clank's head spins round in the opposite direction to his body.

TERMINATOR: DAWN OF FATE

He did say he'd be back. And you never forget the first time you see a human skull being crushed by a caterpillar track. Well here it is again in our video of the game set before the first film. Ever wondered how exactly Skynet took over the world? Find out here.

TREASURE PLANET

More movies into videogames. Reasoning that each Disney movie makes a fortune, they're now making them at quite a rate. And we get a videogame to match. Fortunately the skilled hands of developer Bizarre Creations should keep this platformer in check.

WWE SMACKDOWN! SHUT YOUR MOUTH

Wrestlers aren't known for their politeness - preferring instead to let their tattoos do the talking. So, we suggest you 'shut your mouth' and enjoy this nut-clasping video of the next *WWE* episode.

FERRARI F-355 CHALLENGE

Another arcade classic, this is one from more recent times. AM2's meticulous masterpiece is said to be one of the hardest driving games ever made thanks to its unrelenting realism. Ferrari F-355 Challenge precisely models Ferrari's crimson classic designs.

KONAMI EVOLUTION SPORTS

See not one but three games in the shape of Konami's new Evolution sports range. There's *Evolution Snowboarding*, *Evolution Snowcross* and the now notorious *Evolution Skateboarding* starring our old friend Solid Snake.

HITMAN 2

In anticipation of our soon-to-come playable demo you can sit back and watch the game's action unfold. What the Hitman lacks in hair he more than makes up for in ingenuity and relish for the job.

VIDEO EXTRAS

MAT HOFFMAN INTERVIEW

We're using this as an excuse to promote the excellent-looking *Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2* by allowing a man who's used to suffering blows to the head engage in the fine art of conversation. But here 'tis anyway.

PLAYSTATION.COM

Why aren't you going to playstation.com? Why are you reading this little blurb? Watch this video and realise what you are missing. Buy a PC or Mac and read about PlayStation 2 on it. Go on, you know it makes sense.

THE MAKING OF STUNTMAN

If you thought that making a videogame was a matter of drawing 'ones' and 'noughts' on a DVD in crayon, then prepare to be amazed. The men at Reflections have toiled harder than the ancient pyramid builders.



DEMO 01 THE CONTROLS

- L-STICK - MOVE
- R-STICK - LOOK AROUND
- ⊗ ACTIVATE
- Ⓐ RELOAD
- Ⓜ CROUCH
- Ⓜ AIM
- Ⓜ ALTERNATE FIRE
- Ⓜ MAIN FIRE
- ↑/↓ ZOOM IN/OUT
- ←/→ SWAP WEAPON
- △ PAUSE
- △ GAME/OPTIONS
- PAUSE
- GAME/MISSION STATUS

TIMESPLITTERS 2

PUBLISHER EIDOS GAME TYPE FPS OUT 27 SEPTEMBER PLAYERS 1
(FULL GAME 1 - 16)

THE GAME It's the sequel to the first-person multi-blaster that showed what PS2 could do on launch day. They told us that we didn't need a decent single-player mode thanks to the orgy of Multiplayer modes they'd included. Well, they were lying. The confession comes in the much-improved form of *TimeSplitters 2*. For in addition to every Multiplayer mode you can think of (and a few more besides) there's a cracking time-shifting single-player story, too. What's more if you do have the hardware and the friends, up to 16 of you can fight it out via a mess of linked PS2s.

THE DEMO Welcome to the Oblisk Dam level. Feel free to press and reconfigure the controls. Then it's a simple matter of fulfilling all your mission objectives (press at any stage to see how you're doing) and killing lots of people en route. Change your weapon (do make good use of that sniper rifle - developer Free Radical practically invented the videogame sniper rifle) and bring up your hand scanner which is invaluable for spotting enemies. Watch your strength (the red arc), pick up armour (the blue arc) to keep you safe, and take out the cameras.

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FREE RADICALS' SUPERLATIVE FPS SEQUEL
REVEALED. PREPARE TO DROOL.



14 **THE THING**
CARPENTER'S VISCERAL SCI-FI GLOOPFEST
INSPIRES JITTERS AND SICKLY TERROR.



16 **FERRARI F355 CHALLENGE**
A BRAND NEW RACER THAT HAS 'PEDIGREE'
WRITTEN ALL OVER IT.



18 **UFC THROWDOWN**
RESPECTABLE GENTLEMEN, ROLL UP SHIRT
SLEEVES AND ATTEMPT TO SMASH FACES!



19 **THIS IS SOCCER 2003**
IT DEFINITELY LOOKS THE GOODS... SO *OPS2*
TAKES TO THE PITCH FOR A TRIAL RUN.



20 **BLADE II**
A CLARET DRENCHED UNDEAD BUSTER LOOKS
SET TO BE A BATTLE-EM-UP LIKE NO OTHER.



21 **RALLY FUSION**
MORE FOUR-WHEEL, CROSS-COUNTRY
SHENANIGANS IS ON ITS WAY.



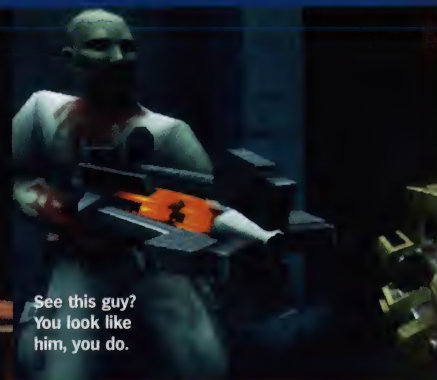
The family
reunion BBQ
ended up a
disaster.



The never-
before-seen
Planet X level.



Wipe out
mutants with a
crossbow!



See this guy?
You look like
him, you do.

WORDS: KEITH STUART

TIMESPLITTERS 2

Free Radical Design has taken a pioneering FPS and turned it into a religious experience. Prepare to be converted.

Publisher: Eidos
Developer: Free Radical Design
Players: 1-4 (more via LAN or iLink)
Out: October

There aren't many games scheduled for release in the next few months that are getting us as monumentally excited as *TimeSplitters 2*. After playing the first two multi-player levels in May we were reminded how much we needed to have the 'Splitters back in our lives. It seemed like a long wait before Eidos came to us with a work-in-progress version of the game with new levels, characters and deathmatch modes. Now we've seen a lot more 'Splitters 2. Is it good? What the hell do you think?

Cast your mind back for a moment to the original *TimeSplitters*. The single most brilliant launch title in terms of showcasing just what the fledgling console was capable of – and the most hilariously frantic multiplayer experience you could lay your hands on. *OPS2* is ashamed to admit we actually stayed in work to play *TimeSplitters*. And remember those times when you couldn't find the mag in the shops on the day it was supposed to come out? That was because we were too busy playing 'Splitters.

Technically speaking, it proved that Free Radical Design had seen the potential in the PS2 chip set and grasped it with both hands. Most notably, the game ran faster than real life, even when there seemed to be a million things happening on screen at once. Maps were cleverly designed, and characters had a stylish half-cartoon, half-real look which made them stand out from other games of its type. The inspired 'Quantum Leap with guns' time-travel story also enabled levels to span different eras, with weapons ranging from the semi-comic blunderbusses of the 18th century to the laser cannons of the 23rd. And at a time when more famous FPS titles were having problems with jerky movement and last-generation graphics, *TimeSplitters* was a breath of cordite-filled air.

Playing *TimeSplitters 2* is definitely something of an epiphany – but then there's no point expecting anything less from Free Radical. Every last element that made the first game so fantastic, down to the trademark 'swoosh' sound which signals the beginning of a level, is present and correct. Only now, everything looks about a hundred times

A freakish unlockable character... who clowns 'round.



The shotty makes it easy to blow off Zombie heads.



The futuristic stylings of the Robot Factory.



STAYING STEALTHY

TimeSplitters 2 encourages you to use stealth without realising it – take the Siberian Dam level, for example. Try to access the complex without watching your back and you'll alert more guards, which in turn hinders your progress.



1. Take out the guards from a distance using your sniper rifle.



2. Shut down the CCTV cameras either by shooting them or turning them off.



3. Find the grenades and use them to blow up the radar dish.



4. Enter the complex, keeping disturbance to a minimum.

PREVIEW

TIMESPLITTERS 2



better. The levels feel about five times bigger and it seems to move even faster. Do you detect a theme here? In practice, it means visuals are crisp, colourful and resolutely solid, possessing a high-res sheen that other PS2 titles have yet to exploit.

DESTROY YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Not to be outdone by *Metal Gear Solid 2*, *TimeSplitters 2* even finds space to integrate endlessly destructible environments, so now you really can smash every light, burst every barrel and break every window. Shoot a chair and it splinters and falls over. Fire at a lighting fixture and it shakes. We all swooned when we discovered the balls on a pool table in the Chicago level bounce off when struck with a round from the Tommy gun. It's not supposed to represent reality, but the effect is immediate – it's just damn good fun shooting the joint up.

The most obvious area of change is in the single-player story sections. In the first game, these were simply a matter of collecting items with only a minimal amount of puzzle-solving. *TimeSplitters 2* introduces objective-based gameplay. These are listed at the beginning of each level and you're reminded on-screen as each one is completed. Here's a few we played through: breaking a prisoner out of jail in the Wild West-themed level with some carefully placed gunpowder; blowing up a safe with TNT in order to gain an entry pass to a mobster club in the Thirties Chicago level; deactivating a security system at a secret installation housed inside a Siberian dam; and gaining entry to a Mayan temple by way of a puzzle in the Aztec Jungle.

In addition to the main objectives, sub-missions are revealed during the course of play, dependent on what skill setting you've opted for. These range from destroying evidence in filing cabinets with timed mines to saving ludicrously busty maidens from fires and shackles, or sabotaging a mobster's supply of whisky barrels with carefully placed bullet holes.

Although some of these can be difficult to complete on a first play-through, the mission structure is so well designed that they never get in the way of the shooting. Ah, the shooting...

Weapons are distributed according to the theme and time period of the environment you're in. The Siberian Dam is set in 1990, for instance, so weapons are modern machine guns, sniper rifles and pistols, while the more futuristic Robot Factory stage includes sci-fi hand and laser guns. All are outrageously powerful and display differing handling techniques. The minigun takes a few seconds to warm up and is prone to overheating, while the one-shot-kill double-barrelled shotgun takes ages to reload. You'll have to be careful to use the flame-thrower from long range to prevent setting yourself on fire and to avoid the plasma autorifle's incandescent shrapnel that bounces lethally around the room. Some of the gunplay is film-inspired, such as the *Desperado* double-handed pistols and the spy flick staple crosshair of the sniper rifles. Look carefully and you'll find remote-controlled machine guns aimed through a CCTV camera and rocket launchers housed in concrete pill boxes. And imagine our surprise when we discovered we could set fire to the tips of crossbow bolts.

KILLER SOUNDTRACK

TimeSplitters 2's soundtrack is already looking to be one of the most thoughtful sound treatments yet committed to an FPS. Where most opt for a post-industrial dirge barely audible under the sound of gunfire, *'Splitters 2*'s music rivals most TV movies. At the Siberian dam, pompous, rousing electric orchestral music accompanies the action, while in Chicago, moody lounge jazz is punctuated by a tenor sax that instantly signals everything 'gangster'. Even better, the epic guitar crescendo of the Wild West theme emulates classic Morricone.

Of course, actually playing *TimeSplitters 2* already borders on the sublime. Feelings of E-number induced childlike excitement aren't uncommon as you deftly shoot a guard's face off from 400 yards and cackle with glee as you flambé someone with the flame-

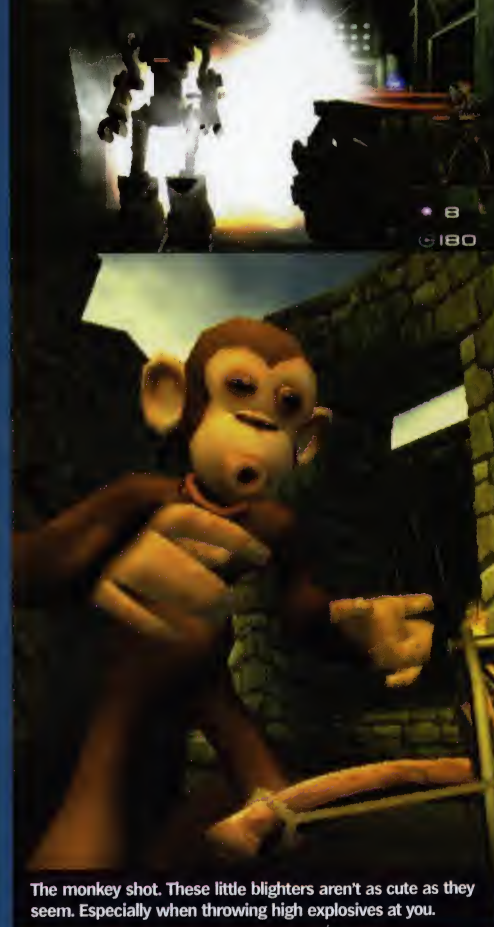
JUST THE FOUR OF US

One for sorrow, two for joy, three for a girl, four for a boy... Heads up for a four-on-four riot!



It goes without saying that *TimeSplitters 2*'s multiplayer levels are still out of this world. Now there are even more styles of play, aside from the classic all-against-all deathmatch. Weapon sets are still customisable, as are bots, while maps are perfectly designed for maximum carnage. Although only two were entirely complete in the version we played – a Training level and a Mexican Wild West level – we also saw a Nightclub level, a Circus level and Neo-Tokyo level. And was that the notorious 'Building Site' stage from the original *TimeSplitters* we saw lurking at the bottom of the list? The prospect of iLink and LAN play is also enticing – full details of *TS2*'s network play capabilities with the review next issue.

The welcome return of the sci-fi autorifle.



The monkey shot. These little blighters aren't as cute as they seem. Especially when throwing high explosives at you.

You could have just shot them. But it's far more fun to blow them up.



Screenshots can't do justice to the quality of the explosions.



thrower, watching them run around like a headless chicken, screeching in agony. There's great satisfaction to be had in completing objectives and finding out what your next task is, too. Will you have to fend off a relentless bevy of robots? Or protect a scientist while he defuses a series of nuclear bombs?

But all this gives you just the faintest glimpse of what *TimeSplitters 2* is capable of. It's funny, accessible, immediate and insanely violent, in an eclectic, slapstick kind of way, but it's also supremely intelligent, forever challenging you to hone your skills and find the most effective route through its huge, varied, gorgeously decked-out levels.

And, finally, we come to the monkeys. Much has already been said about Free Rad including the perennially popular simians in *'Splitters 2*. It'll probably shock the RSPCA to hear that the game features animals. Animals you can shoot. Like bears and, yes, cute 'little fella' monkeys. But don't worry. We certainly don't condone the shooting of chimps with flaming crossbow bolts. We never did. Honest. □

We certainly don't condone the shooting of chimps with flaming crossbow bolts. We never did. Honest.



ON TARGET? TIMESPLITTERS 2

Without a doubt, this is going to be one of the PS2 games of summer 2002/03. We've played it and we've already seen the light. Join us...



VISUALS

Like nothing else you've seen in a PS2 first-person shooter.



HUMOUR

Free Rad proves that mindless killing can make you laugh.



ORIGINALITY

Unusual for a sequel, but there's so much new here it earns it.

CARDBOARD CUT OUT

Challenge levels provide you with tasks to complete in a set time, and new characters and other goodies are unlocked if you succeed. One of our favourites so far is Fall Out.

TIME SPLITTERS 2

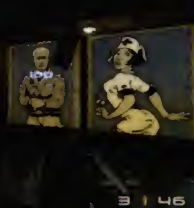
Fall Out

After turning snitch on Big Tony it seems poor Marco didn't have his escape route planned. Tony's not the brightest of guys though, and he's sent some cardboard cutouts after Marco. Help Marco through Chicago without killing any old ladies.

- Best: 1297 Points
- Gold: 1700 Points
- Silver: 1500 Points
- Bronze: 1200 Points

× Select Back

RANK
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Change page Select

TIME SPLITTERS 2



Select

1. The challenge is set... advance through the Chicago level without shooting any of the pop-up card targets with ladies on.

2. Points are awarded for hitting the correct targets. That's a man with a gun not a lady – so shoot him for Chrissakes!

3. As you can see, it's pretty tough. But you do want to unlock that playable monkey character, don't you?

4. Success! The bronze is ours. A bit more practise and that elusive gold will in the cabinet too. Now to try another level...



ABOVE LEFT: Okay, who changed the settings to 'all-girl bots'? You filthy lech.
ABOVE: The Circus multiplayer level. Very in-tents.

Even the snooker balls on the table will bounce around if you shoot at them.



THE THING

Is that shape-shifting alien DNA in your blood or are you just pleased to see me? We'll take that inhuman roar as a no, then...

Publisher: Universal Interactive

Developer: Computer Artworks

Players: 1

Out: October

WORDS: TIM CLARK



Norris's head is still mouthing a silent scream as it parts company with his body. Landing with a nauseating thud, it sprouts skeletal legs and scuttles across the floor. The rest of the survivors are too shell-shocked to speak, so it's left for Palmer to voice what everyone in the terrified audience is already thinking, "You gotta be fucking kidding me!"

Back in 1982, John Carpenter was at the height of his stomach-churning powers and, with a little help from special effects wunderkind Rob Bottin, unleashed the scariest movie monster this side of HR Giger's phallic face-muncher. Two decades later, someone at Universal Interactive has finally cottoned on to the fact that, hey, roasting shape-shifting aliens with a flame-thrower makes for a pretty good game.

Developed by Pommy-based Computer Artworks, *The Thing* picks up a few months after events shown in the movie, with a rescue team sent in to investigate the disappearance of research scientists stationed at an isolated Antarctic base. Although a typical blend of action, exploration and rudimentary puzzle-solving, *The Thing* raises itself above standard survival fare by adding squad-based play and resource management to the mix. You're the leader of one four-man rescue team (the other having inevitably, already managed to get itself lost) and issue orders via a simple interface. Don't bother getting too attached to your boys, though – chances are, more than a few will turn out to be shape-shifting alien monstrosities in disguise. Which brings us to *The Thing's* single biggest innovation: the trust/fear dynamic. As the nightmare unfolds, friendly non-player characters will come closer to losing their marbles every time one of their buddies transforms into a sickening alien eyesore. Before long, they become suspicious of everyone, and in this state they're worse than useless. You can monitor a teammate's morale by using the squad menu – or by watching their behaviour. Basically, if someone's retching their guts up and whimpering like a *Pop Idol* reject, chances are they're not handling things too well.

You can win back their trust in a number of ways, from killing monsters in plain view to dishing out items. Giving a dribbling paranoid

MAN IS THE WARMEST PLACE TO HIDE

Something sinister and deadly has been defrosted – and, no, it's not that packet of fish fingers you forgot about last month...



John Carpenter's version of *The Thing* was actually a remake of the 1951 movie *The Thing From Another World*, directed by Christian Nyby, which was itself based on a John W. Campbell short story called "Who Goes There?"

The 1982 version starred Kurt Russell as RJ MacReady, a whisky-guzzling, chess-playing chopper pilot posted to a remote Antarctic research installation. Things go carrot-shaped after a group of Norwegian scientists decide to defrost a deadly alien lifeform that's capable of mimicking and absorbing any other species. The movie ends with MacReady and a fellow survivor huddled in the remains of the burning base, each unsure whether the other is an alien (watch their breath for a possible clue).

The Thing is now regarded as a cult classic thanks to its grisly effects and magnificently paranoid ensemble performance, but when first released the film was a relative flop, finding itself cruelly overshadowed by a rather more family-orientated take on alien visitation. Cheers *ET*.



The game includes an auto-aim element, which makes targeting these little critters slightly easier.

Keep the Action button held down for a set period of time to activate machinery and doors.

Overkill: Most of the larger monsters need to be both shot and burned.



wreck a loaded assault rifle strikes us as ill-advised, but nonetheless the system is an integral part of the gameplay and offers a genuinely fresh spin on an otherwise tired genre. Arguably the most intriguing demonstration of its potency occurs during a section that pays homage to the movie's infamous blood test scene. Suffice to say, it looks like the game's 20 levels are going to include enough twists to keep even the most jaded action game aficionados on their toes.

Good use is made of the Dual Shock 2's rumble function to simulate a palpitating heartbeat, while a howling Antarctic wind also adds plenty of atmosphere. That said, the menu system isn't that intuitive, and, despite the inclusion of a first-person perspective for aiming, the controls during combat can feel chaotic. The transformation effects and alien models don't instill the same sense of terror as their cinematic counterparts, either. Play it in the dark and it could be a different story, though. *The Thing* will be invading Earth later this month and we can't wait to see how the final build plays. Until then, why don't we just wait here for a while?

See what happens anyway... □

ON TARGET? THE THING

Will *The Thing* take over the world or should it be left in natural cold storage for another millennium? There's only one way to find out.



FEAR

Genuinely unnerving – even when grunts soil their undies in terror.



GRAPHICS

Great flame-thrower effects, but less-than-terrifying aliens.



SOUND

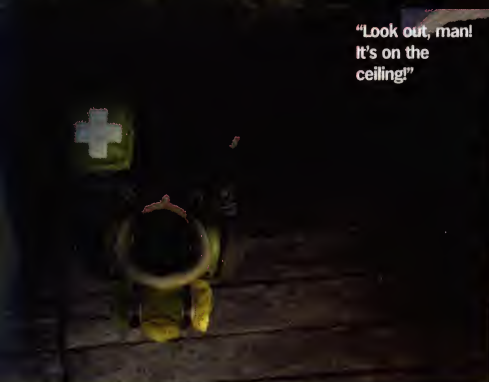
Decent voice-acting and some genuinely eerie sound effects.



Fire in the hole! Fun with high explosives.



It slowly began to dawn on Blake that the other chaps might, just might, be infected.



"Look out, man! It's on the ceiling!"

"You call my mum a Thing?" Yes.



TRUST NO-ONE

Your highly trained team comprises three different troop types – but if they start looking at you funny it's toasting time.

SOLDIERS

With itchy trigger fingers and big mouths, these are your basic grunts. Comfortable using all kinds of weaponry, they also react quickest when confronted by shambling alien abominations.



MEDICS

Keeping the quack alive is crucial, because he can heal you, and the rest of the team, without using up valuable health packs. Equip the doc with a slidearm and he's happy to pitch in with the alien-barbecuing as well.



ENGINEERS

Capable of mending just about any type of machinery, Engineers are essential members of the squad. Without one of these lads on-side, you won't stand a chance against the game's more complex puzzles.



FERRARI F355 CHALLENGE

Prepare for a racing experience so authentic, it might just make you better or at least a much faster driver in real life!

Publisher: Sony
Developer: Sega
Players: 1-2
Out: October

During the lifetime of the Dreamcast, Sega certainly burnt the midnight oil producing a wealth of racing titles for its defunct console. Of course now with the developer flushing out games for all formats, both new and old favourites are finding their way onto PS2. Even before its appearance on Sega's

console, *Ferrari F355 Challenge* had already carved out a name for itself on the showroom floor of arcades, featuring an impressive three video screen arrangement, effectively extending the drivers peripheral view of the track. However, the game was far from an arcade inspired racer and with its arrival on the early console it soon built up a reputation as one of the most uncompromisingly realistic driving sims ever committed to gamer's lounge rooms. And the good news is you too will soon have the chance to hop behind the steering wheel of this Italian dream machine.

Rather than a direct port of the original console version, Sega have given their PS2 offering the once over, adding just enough new options to make any Dreamcast owner beige with envy, while remaining true to the games unique driving features. For those in need of a brief refresher course, the series to date has already offered drivers the chance to road test the once flagship model in the Ferrari fleet, the F355 and drive it under some of the most arguably realistic conditions on console. Then from within the comfort of the F355's plush interior, drivers endeavoured to 'tame the wild beast', by competing across a handful of well-known tracks. Though owing to the cars devilishly accurate driving characteristics, this was no feat for the careless lead foot, as the road to success was via perfect timed race lines and ideal car settings, not to mention a touch of driving panache. Now if the mention of a realistic driving sim has some reaching for the closest bucket, fear not! The developers were also wise enough to include a series of optional driver assist functions, making the game still accessible to those with either

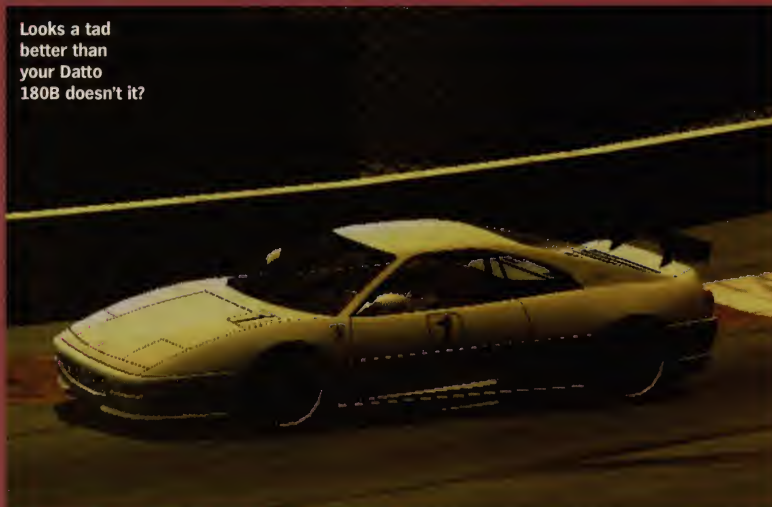


REAL DEAL

Unlike the developers of *GT3* style games who must juggle the specs of dozens of different makes and models, all the team members from AM2 had to do was hop on a plane bound for Ferrari's HQ in Italy. They were armed with a measuring tape and rolls of duty free film, then proceeded to record and masterfully recreated every solid centimetre of this utter babe magnet.



Choosing the right line through each course is of utmost importance in order to proceed.



Looks a tad better than your Datto 180B doesn't it?



Some of the background scenery will impress.



Conquer Ferrari's own testing track...



It's a shame Ferraris don't come in purple.



Choose your view! *OPS2* likes the 'rear view', every day of the week.



More options have been included in the PlayStation 2 version.



little experience or patience.

So with these features all still well intact, what else can we expect to see when it arrives on PS2? A new look menu will provide access to most of the original race modes, except for Network Race which offered only pseudo online racing features anyway. Though now in addition to the Arcade, Championship and Versus Play race modes, comes something new called 'Great Driver Challenge'. While the first three options need little explanation, this new mode aims to test your driving skills to the max. To succeed in this mode requires not only smooth and speedy driving, but no contact with barriers or other cars, and also to remain on the track at all times. The incentive here will be a points system that rewards players for impressive driving such as overtaking and power slides, but then takes points away just as quickly for contact with anything other than the track.

By now you're probably wondering what all this precision driving will earn you. Naturally, working through the Championship opens up additional tracks, though along with the new Challenge mode, you'll also gradually unlock a collection of notable images and movies from Ferrari history - no doubt proving a veritable gold mine for fans of the Italian car maker. The game's eight original courses, along with three PS2 exclusive tracks have been carefully modelled after the real thing. These will include the fast and twisty Suzuka, home of the Japanese Grand Prix; the Long Beach street circuit, with its 90 degree corners and unforgiving walls; and Motegi Oval Speedway for flat out, Indycar-style blasts. And of course no self-respecting Ferrari simulation would be complete without Ferrari's own test circuit, the legendary - and lightning quick - Monza. Once behind the wheel, another welcomed PS2 feature is the second view option. Drivers of the earlier games had to make do with an in car only view. Now an external view has been included, offering a nice overhead perspective of the car from behind.

Of the popular features set to make a return to the PS2 port, driver aids will no doubt come as a great relief for those that

wrestle with realistic car physics. Four in total will be on tap including assistance with stability, traction and both intelligent and anti-lock braking. The Novice mode offers the choice to switch these on and off at any time, whereas the harder levels make drivers do without. The other racing edge the game will give drivers is being able to tweak some of the Ferrari's settings. Both appearance and performance of the car can be altered by adjusting height, springs, stabilisers, and other inner workings. While OPS2 found that adjusting these settings can make a difference in best lap times, no settings will make up for the raw skill still required to win races. Then finally with full race data and dynamic replays, drivers will be able to analyse just where they're going wrong and how to shave that extra second off their lap times.

Though with this sprinkle of new arcade friendly options, the original game's brutally real driving physics aren't expected to win over those who believe perfect cornering involves bouncing cars off walls. F355 is a game designed by and for racing purists, and that's likely to suit Ferrari fans just fine. □

ON TARGET? FERRARI F355 CHALLENGE

On the outside, this game guarantees two things, to be both frustrating yet rewarding, but for those with patience it could also prove to be fun too?

<p>SOUND The engines sound lacklustre and the DJ is irritating with his '80's metal play list.</p>	<p>LICENCES The cars couldn't look more bona fide. But alas, they won't be featuring any visual damage.</p>	<p>REALISM If the handling was any tougher to master, the game would require leather race gloves.</p>
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UFC THROWDOWN

Ultimate Fighting scuffles its way onto PS2. But is it possible to reconcile realism with fun?

Publisher: Ubi Soft
Developer: Crave
Players: 1-2
Release: September



Games have but one purpose in life: to entertain. And that often means realism playing second fiddle to sheer visceral thrills – which, is entirely as it should be. Beat-'em-ups, in particular, have never been overly troubled by notions of sober authenticity. After all,

why bother with the fiddly dynamics of Newtonian physics when you can be busy throwing scene-obliterating fireballs or executing double-somersault axe kicks?

Fireballs, though, you definitely won't be seeing in *UFC Throwdown*, a game that has a tendency to grab you by the throat and pound your face in with its unbridled combination of realism and, at times, sheer brutality. Based on the American Ultimate Fighting Championship martial arts events, the game – an updated and improved version of Xbox's *UFC Tapout* – pits fighters from a range of combat disciplines against one another within the confines of an octagonal cage. Minimum rules and maximum bloodshed are, of course, a given.

It's fully licensed, so all 28 characters are modelled after their real-life Ultimate Fighter counterparts, although for an Aussie audience this does seem a tad pointless. Most gamers are unlikely to have heard of even the most 'famous' (Marco Ruas, Tito Ortiz or Dan Severn ring any bells? Exactly). Still, each UFCer is blessed with his own distinct style and move-set, and there are plenty of nice touches, even down to the individual way each fighter throws a punch.

The matches themselves are unlike any other you'll find on a PS2 fighting title. The emphasis is as much on grappling and submissions as it is on striking, with chokeholds and arm-locks just as acceptable as jabs, left hooks or kicks in the head. It takes some getting used to, especially as beat-'em-up staples such as combos and

special moves are eschewed in favour of, well, rolling around on the mat and hugging.

Fortunately, a Training option helps you get your head round the idiosyncratic game mechanics by providing a sparring partner who, handily, doesn't fight back. Most useful is the ability to place your character in any of seven different positions, from standing to, erm, backmount bottom. The best tactic here, should you ever find yourself in such an uncompromising squeeze, appears to be simple: elbow your assailant in the face.

While the game looks largely finished at the moment, a few annoying graphical glitches still need to be fixed. Another concern is that the fights may end up feeling a tad samey and repetitive. Still, there's no shortage of nifty ideas at work, and for those after something a bit different from your typical PS2 scrapper – replete with a dash of unsettling savagery – *UFC Throwdown* could be just the job. Just pray that you don't bump into it in a dark alley late at night, OK? □

ON TARGET? UFC THROWDOWN

Throwdown's predecessor, *Ultimate Fighting Championship*, was something of a damp squib on PSone, but this promises more.



GRAPHICS
Solid-looking characters, although still a few glitches.



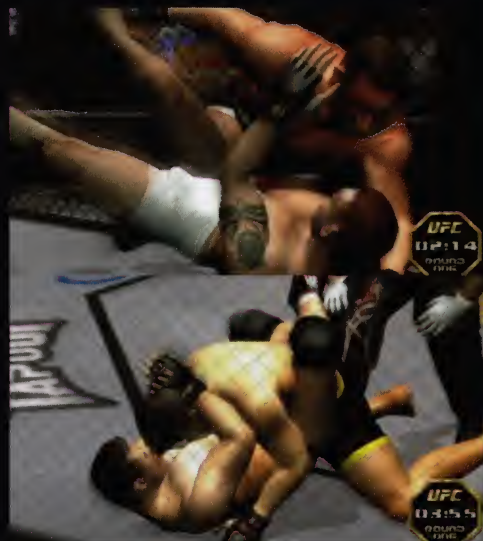
MOVES
Bone-crunching manoeuvres aplenty, but no combos.



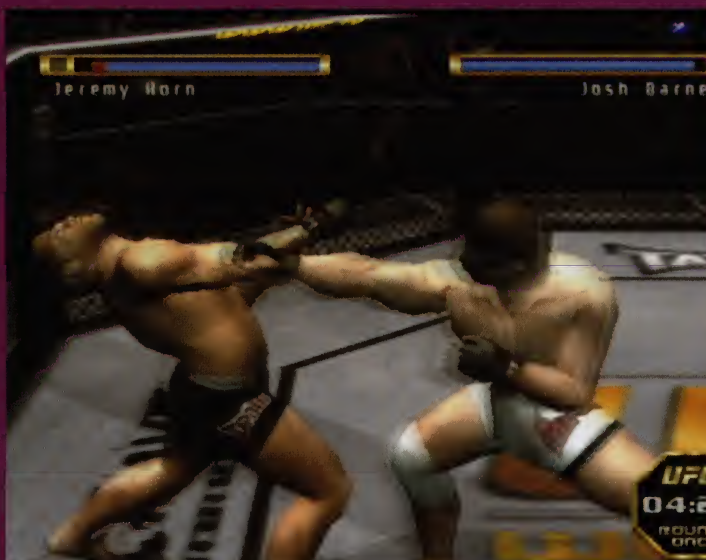
REALISM
Without doubt, the most realistic PS2 fighter out there.

TEKKEN IT AIN'T

Beefy boys get to it with some hard-to-the-floor action.



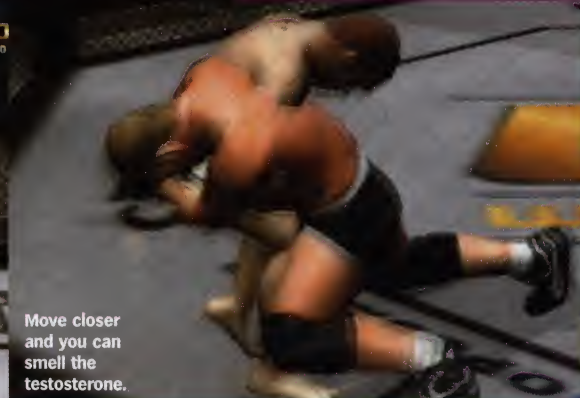
Most matches end up on the mat, where you'll find yourself in either the 'mount' or 'guard' position. Don't thump your opponent too much here – you'll just tire yourself out. Instead, try to lock your opponent down until he submits.



If your striking skills are good enough, and you can avoid being taken to the mat, it's possible to win simply by pounding your opponent in the face.



Training is ideal for practising reversals.



Move closer and you can smell the testosterone.



The roster includes many of UFC's biggest names, both past and present.



Time it right and you can snatch an armlock or chokehold out of nowhere.

WORDS: MIKE WILCOX
THIS IS SOCCER 2003

Yes Jim, the Motherland still calls it football, but not as we know it, not as we know it

Publisher: Sony
Developer: Sony
Players: 1-8
Release date: September 2002

With this year's World Cup all but a faded memory, are there emotional embers still smoldering away somewhere inside your sporting soul? Here's something to soothe that feeling, there's another soccer game on the horizon. Just why the

developers failed to follow the rest of the pack and deliver this game during the four weeks the world stopped to watch soccer is a mystery, perhaps they were all stuck in front of the tellie themselves. Nevertheless, Sony's Team SoHo has been hard at work putting the finishing touches on the fourth *TIS* installment.

This Is Soccer 2003, has seen the team rebuild much of this version from the ground up, firstly removing any left over PSOne code from the game's original structure, then adding a host of updated features including new player animations, teams, stadiums, cut-scenes, gameplay, game modes and team strategies. The developer has also been busy creating some of the most realistic player likenesses in a soccer game to date, complete with detailed facial animations. The stadiums haven't been forgotten either, and all ten featured in the game have larger models, enhanced structural detail and more advanced lighting.

But the changes are not just on the surface. Refined AI will see players behave in a more intelligent but also unpredictable fashion, both in team formations and on their own. "For example", says the game's producer, Tony Racine, "previously if someone got sent off and you were down to ten men, it would stick to the formation and leave a huge gap. But now if you get two or three players sent off, you can see your players struggling to fill the space. It makes the game less straightforward." There's also a broader selection of formations and strategies for the manager in you to choose from. Enhancing the game's longevity, additional competitions are

being added, taking the number of trophies up for grabs to a total of over sixty. You can also sink your nice clean boots into the new career mode and attempt to push a school team up through the semi-pro ranks to the lower divisions.

Through the FIFPro licensing arrangement, the game will somehow manage to squeeze on 13,500 of its registered players in over 650 domestic and international teams. New additions include extra European leagues, plus some from North America, Japan, Brazil, Argentina, Korea and Mexico. As before, you will be able to play versions of every international and club competition around, with full seasons replicated.

The gameplay itself is shaping up to full match fitness too. Just like its predecessor, the pace of the action looks on the money, and you can't help feel the adrenaline as you're bearing down on your opponent's goal.

If Sony's SoHo team can preserve this delicate balance of action and gameplay options, this could well wind up the game of choice for discerning players after a graphical gem when the

ON TARGET?
THIS IS SOCCER 2003

With a new game engine, enhanced graphic detail, and more of just about everything else, the reigning kings of the field better watch out.



GRAPHICS

The stadiums are filled with cardboard crowds, some of the big name players look great.



AI

Field formations and single player movements see teams working together better than ever.



SOUND

Surround sound helps place the player in the middle of a raucous crowd.



We love the 'Roos - but will we make it to the World Cup '06?



The early build OPS2 played did not include full uniforms.

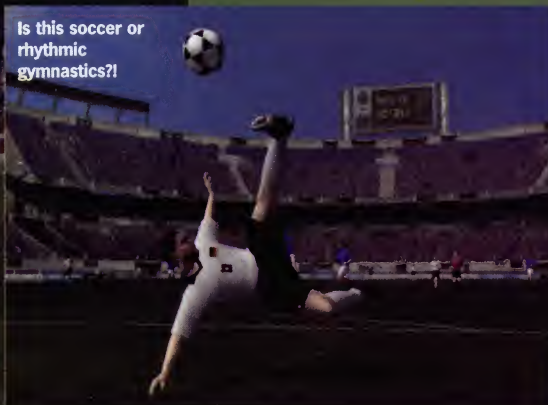


You'll see identical goals over time.

Dramatic cameras adds to the spectacle.



Ballack, Cannavaro, Dyer and Puyol. The big stars look unbelievably authentic.



Is this soccer or rhythmic gymnastics?!



Some excellent animations are included.

WORDS: PAUL FITZPATRICK

BLADE II

The stakes are high, so will playing *Blade II* be a fangless job or bloody good fun? We'll let chew decide...

Publisher: Activision
Developer: Mucky Foot
Out: October
Players: 1



Pssst! Want to know how to make a decent game based on a movie licence? Forget paying top dollar to get the vocal talents of the latest Hollywood beau hunk/pneumatic starlet for a kick-off. And no need to use state-of-the-art multi-camera motion capture

technology either. In fact, between the two of us, you'd be better off lobbing the film script in the bin before you get too attached. The secret to making a cracking movie tie-in is deceptively simple – and, curiously enough, it runs through the veins of Activision's upcoming *Blade II* like so much rhesus ketchup. Don't try and recreate the specifics. No. Instead, capture the *spirit* of the film and you'll be on the home straight. Clarification required? Right this way...

On the big screen, *Blade II* was a blood-soaked no-brainer, a film so gleefully undemanding that the original *Blade* seemed like *Wild Strawberries* by comparison. It was, in short, a lot of fun.

Blade II, the game 'inspired' by the movie, is about as deep as a graze on a wafer. Irresponsibly drenched in blood and, thanks to a nifty new combat system, treble the fun to play. It's not rocket science, but then neither is hacking vampires to death.

So let's get a few things out of the way. The story is original, but doesn't intrude on the action, and there are puzzles, but not the kind to have you up at night.

The combat system, however, is a thoughtful development. You control Blade with the left analogue stick, his combat skills with the right. Let's say he's surrounded by the drooling undead. Pushing up on the right analogue makes him punch and kick towards the top of the screen. Pushing the same stick left has him lunging left, and so forth. It takes a little getting used to, but in this way you can fight in a 360 degree area at all times. Time your strikes just

right and you'll be treated to one of a host of brutally OTT finishing moves. Our favourite? The stake in the forehead.

But hand-to-hand combat is just one of your options. Before each mission, you can tool up with a selection of weapons, including a shotgun, mach pistol, silver knuckle-dusters and handy UV grenades that stun humans and make toast of vampires. Unusually, the default fire button is R3. In practice, this makes for great fights – beating two enemies back with the butt of your shotgun before blowing away their fast-approaching compadre is a fluid action and flashy as hell to watch.

Then there's Blade's signature sword, which becomes available when the dismembering fun racks up and nudges you into 'bloodlust mode'. And that happens an awful lot.

What else? FMVs are currently a bit shonky and we have a few collision detection issues, but that can easily be fixed. Otherwise, *Blade II* is rocking on like a monster. Don't expect it to clean up at the game of the year awards. If you're looking for a bloody good laugh, however... □

ON TARGET? BLADE II

There may be puzzles, but *Blade II* is really a roaming fighter. And, thanks to the new fighting system and wanton gore, it's great fun.



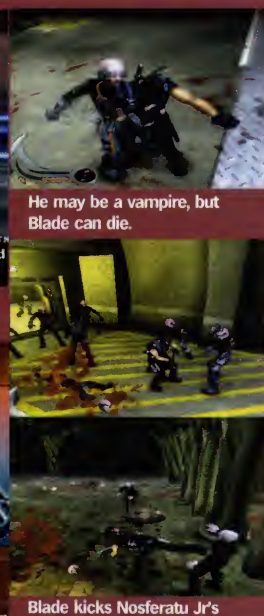
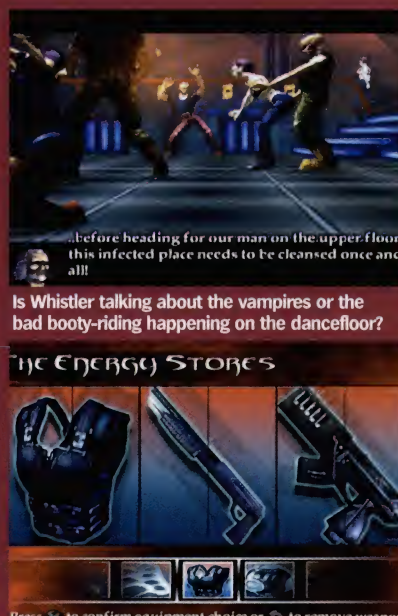
FMV
In-game graphics better than the FMV? Now that's unusual.



360° FIGHTING SYSTEM
Dead easy to use. Rather flashy, too.

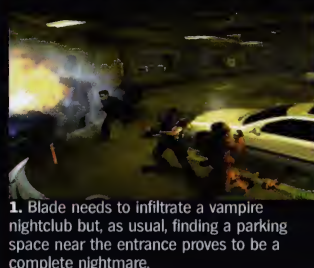


VEIN CLARET
Forget plasters; you're gonna need a mop with this one.



MURDER ON THE DANCEFLOOR

Of the current crop of *Blade II*'s missions, 'Blood Club' is our favourite so far. It's also a typical example of the game's preoccupations.



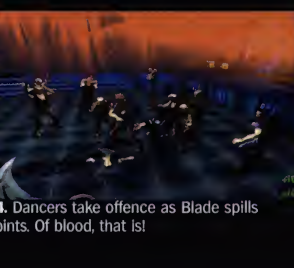
1. Blade needs to infiltrate a vampire nightclub but, as usual, finding a parking space near the entrance proves to be a complete nightmare.



2. The dancefloor beckons, but before that Blade takes a slash. Slash! See what we did there? Sword? Slash? Toilet? Suit yourself.



3. Refreshed, Blade heads into the club and checks out the music. The DJ's playing some killer cuts, but our hero has some of his own to deliver.



4. Dancers take offence as Blade spills pints. Of blood, that is!



5. Erm. Kill, kill, kill, kill. KILLLLLLLLLLL!

PREVIEW

RALLY FUSION: THE RACE OF CHAMPIONS

WORDS: JONTI DANIES

RALLY FUSION: THE RACE OF CHAMPIONS

Michael Schumacher races Colin McRae in the Canaries? Not quite, but still pretty racy.

Publisher: Activision
Developer: Climax
Players: 1-2
Release: October



The Race Of Champions, on which *Rally Fusion* is based, is something of an oddity in the sporting calendar. Instead of really big racing champs getting behind the wheel, this yearly event is peopled by a gang of former winners and modern-day (almost) big names from the racing pantheon (Alister McRae, Johnny Herbert, et al). And it's not just traditional roadsters who head to the sunny climes of Gran Canaria either; some bike racers are even invited to try their luck on all fours. A strange event, then. But fodder for a videogame simulation? Activision seems to think so.

The 'Fusion' part of the title hints at this being more than a straightforward rally affair. It is, in fact, an amalgam of many different disciplines, all of which are explored via the many game modes: Rally Cross pits you against four other cars, Circuit involves racing around super-special stages, while Elimination forces every driver to keep up the pace or face being ditched at regular intervals. And then there's Follow the Leader, which encourages a constant tussle for first place in a similar manner to PSone's *Tokyo Highway Battle*, but with a health bar system, whereby those behind the leader suffer continual energy depletion – only the driver in pole position is safe. Also deserving a special mention is Checkpoint, an encapsulation of the racing model pioneered by *Sega Rally*, a welcome homage to arcade racing games. And these are merely the Quick Race modes we sampled in this 60 percent complete build – the final version, Climax assures us, will feature even more fuel-consuming options.

The real Race of Champions takes place exclusively on Gran Canaria, but that doesn't limit *Rally Fusion's* tracks to the parched deserts. Somehow Alpine and Arctic themes (among other non-Balearic offerings) have also been

included. Likewise, the cars available are an eclectic mix. From a Ford Escort Mk 1 (remember those?) to a monstrous Audi TT rally car, there's something here for every rally enthusiast to coo over. The models are impressively detailed, too – possibly more so than those found in any other rally game on PS2. Combined with full damage and dirt effects, *Rally Fusion* is already looking more authentic than many of its peers.

Of course, if a fusion of styles is to stick, the core gameplay has to be sound, too – and while not yet fully honed, *Rally Fusion's* cars certainly feel comfortable to drive. However, it's still possible to flip and spin a motor with a simple error of judgement, so the handling isn't quite there yet.

Vehicles also tend to hug the track, as though *Rally Fusion's* wheels and surfaces were composed mostly of Velcro. Still, Climax has the time and skill to tweak gameplay and set pulses racing so *OPS2* has its fingers crossed that they'll come through. Based on the developer's track record to date, we're more than confident the team can pull it off. □

ON TARGET? RALLY FUSION: THE RACE OF CHAMPIONS

With countless racing sims already available, *Rally Fusion* will have to add a new spin to impress. Thing is, it looks like it's doing just that.



CONTROLS

In need of balancing and refining, but fundamentally okay.



GRAPHICS

Other than small glitches, definitely looks the part.



FUSION

Range of challenges that few other PS2 racers can rival.

SIDeseat DRIVER

Listen to your co-pilot for some sage-like advice during rallies. Dent the car, though, and she'll turn the air blue.



1. "EASY RIGHT TURN"

It's all happy families and efficiency when you're on the racing line.

2. "STOP BANGING US ABOUT!"

The bumper's history and our companion's temper looks like it's about to follow suit.

3. "YOU'LL WRECK THE FUCKING CAR!"

Now she's got a point here. However with just one wheel left, it's all a bit late.



Rally Fusion's car models are looking just fine.



Alpine adventures, but there's no time for sightseeing or lederhosen frolics.



It's not good clean fun, but there are plenty of locations and conditions to experience.



Looks like Las Vegas has taken a turn for the worse.



SMASH ALL



PlayStation®2



AUTHORITY

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EDITED BY RICHIE YOUNG

Cars now feature some 16,000 polygons and more realistic damage.



THE DRIVE OF YOUR LIFE

OPS2 scoops world first info on World Rally Championship 02.

EVOLUTION STUDIOS HAS finally revealed details of its highly anticipated rally title, *World Rally Championship 02*. It follows the rapturous reception for the original game released last November that quickly became the benchmark for other PlayStation 2 rally games to follow. "Finally, the PS2 has delivered a realistic racing game with balls," was our gushing conclusion when we first revealed the game.

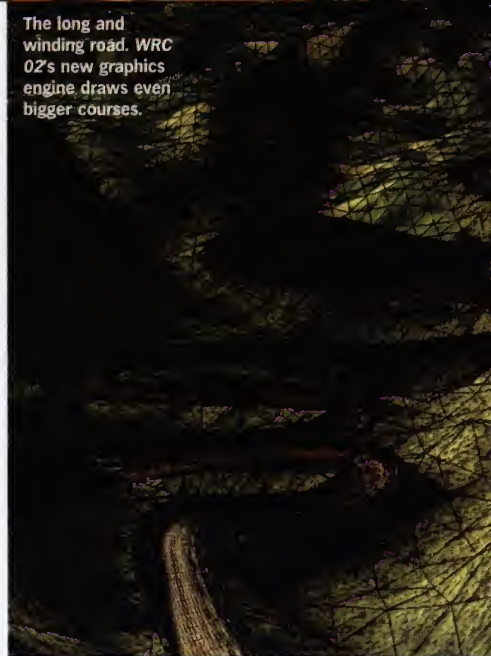
WRC was the first rally game 'proper' for PS2 with a seemingly endless flood of similarly inclined racers swiftly following – these days it seems that every month a new rally game is announced or released. However, aside from Eden Studios' accomplished *V-Rally 3* and the competent *Rally Championship* from SCI, none looked like stealing WRC's crown. Now, with the release of Codemasters' *Colin McRae Rally 3* fast approaching, WRC02's title faces solid competition. So what has game Producer Martin Kenwright and his talented team at Evolution Studios done to improve on WRC? With typical Scouse charm

Kenwright claims the first game was simply a "shakedown" for the main racing event that is WRC02.

MORE EXPANSIVE ENVIRONMENTS

The new game holds 800km of photo-realistic track, with over 124 stages across 14 countries. Even the surfaces of the roads are blessed with an incredible amount of detail, allowing Evolution to put in thousands of tiny bumps, ruts and dips further increasing the tiny nuances of rally driving. Other highlights include the implementation of water within stages (rivers, streams, lakes and fjords), plus realistic, country-specific landmarks, towns and villages. Furthermore, now that the renderer is faster, scenery such as a forest, for example, is actually made up of tens of thousands of trees, heightening the game's realism. Increased graphical textures help make the terrain look organic rather than artificial.

The long and winding road. WRC 02's new graphics engine draws even bigger courses.





THE SHAKEDOWN

Under the bonnet with World Rally Championship 02's Producer.

Martin Kenwright is always keen to play down the competition between his and other rally titles. The Producer's line is that there's always room for more than one 'good' rally game. Still with Colin McRae Rally 3 set to return in the coming months, there are obvious questions to be asked. Here are his replies.

We reckon you made the best rally game on PS2 in WRC. Now there seems to be an abundance of similar titles on the market. How much pressure has there been to create a market-leading game again?

We're on a five-year plan. This is not meant to be conceited or arrogant but what if I said that WRC was a 'shakedown' practice run for WRC02...? We've set a precedent in WRC. We know we have to deliver a better product all round - there's great competition from fine development teams. But we are not ready to concede anything just yet. And anyway, don't be daft, best rally game? Who told you that?

You once said that WRC's main competition is cable channel Eurosport rather than any other rally games. Is this still the case?

The truth is we used reality to create reality, not the influence of other games. We are moving away from very hardcore simulations to more of an entertainment experience. Television is the next best thing to actually being there. I felt other games gave you claustrophobia as opposed to agoraphobia. We want the big picture, spectacular vistas, jaw-dropping locations that do as much for the relative locations as Judith Chalmers does for *Wish You Were Here*...? We're just moving away from the traditional look and feel of other rally games.

What are you most proud of in WRC02 so far?

That our ambition is all starting to pay off. The depth of the product is immense. To me rallying is about man and machine against the elements. The track technology makes our worlds real, the cars look and feel real. It's as extreme a sport as you can get and I think we have captured that 'being there' feeling of immersion. We just dared to be different and have pushed the PS2 to the limit. We can't put it down.

Damp, grey and muddy - it could only be the Welsh valleys.



The Ford Focus shows off a lovely 'dust' effect.

NEW GAMEPLAY ELEMENTS AND HANDLING

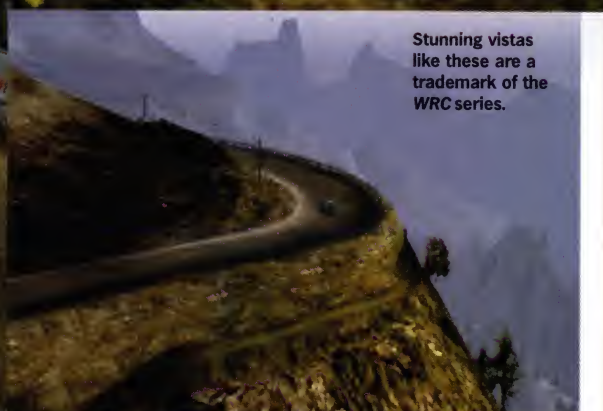
Novice drivers who've not passed their videogame test are catered for with tutorials, and as the player's skill level increases, the car's handling becomes more complex. In contrast, an in-depth Expert mode is three times bigger, giving hardcore rally fans a serious test of their racing mettle. Finally Kenwright assures us that the handling of the cars has been improved for a bumpier, more hair-raising drive through the countryside.

OFFICIAL 2002 DRIVERS AND CARS

The 2002 models of all seven official World Rally Championship cars will be included in WRC02. So that's the Citroën Xsara, Ford Focus, Hyundai Accent, Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution, Peugeot 206, Skoda Octavia and the Subaru Impreza all detailed down to sponsor logos, spoilers and alloy wheels. Aside from one Scotsman (assigned to other game duties) all the 2002 championship drivers' likenesses are in place, with Marcus Grönholm, Carlos Sainz, Gilles Panizzi, Richard Burns and Harri Rovanpera taking the wheel.

AN EVEN BIGGER GAME

Bigger and better vistas, even more realistic terrain, all with minimal fogging - the main goals Evolution Studios set itself for WRC02. In order



Stunning vistas like these are a trademark of the WRC series.



Damp, grey and muddy - it could only be the Welsh valleys.

to do this, the team has binned all the existing programming code and rewritten it from scratch. Now the renderer (the engine that draws the track) is several times faster than before and can draw two to three times more course than in WRC, with up to four times the amount of trackside objects. Anyone who owns or has played WRC will know what these enhancements could add to a game that already had an impressive sense of scale. □ GW

*Further game information will be rolled out in the coming issue. WRC 02 is scheduled for November and will be published by Sony.

EENY, MEENY, MINY, GO!

Infogrames announces the return of PSone fave *Micro Machines*.

CRUSHING YOUR MATE'S little plastic car with a mallet. Ring any bells? If you ever played *Micro Machines* on PSone, you'll no doubt have fond memories of its frantic Multiplayer mode and the hilarity that ensued once you discovered that mallet power-up. Well, now Infogrames has revealed it's bringing a *Micro Machines* game to PS2. But how do you improve on such a basic gameplay concept?

The first PSone title was released in 1997 under the title *Micro Machines V3* and offered simple top-down 3D racing. The clever bit was how the cars' 'micro' nature endowed the everyday household race track environments (kitchen table, back garden, bedroom) with a strange, surreal quality: teacups became giant obstacles, classroom rulers perilous bridges... Elsewhere, in a beach level, a sandcastle became a towering hill climb. And then there was that Four-player mode, which introduced a peculiar control

system whereby two players shared a Joypad to control their vehicles.

Precious little information has been released about the PS2 version currently in development by Sheffield House, but screenshots suggest little has changed in terms of gameplay. Obviously, the graphics are obviously much improved. So far, we've seen a barnyard level, complete with roosters and hay bales, a crime level, which looks to be based around the location of a seedy drug den, and further stages set on a spaceship and in a jungle. No details yet on new power-ups or vehicles, but we're more than happy to see the return of the mallet. Spy would hazard a guess that multiplayer gaming will play a big part, too. Hopefully with PS2's MultiTap, we can say adios to those shared Joypad difficulties... **□ GW**

**Micro Machines* will be released through Infogrames/Ozisoft in November.



It's hammer time! Flatten the opposition with a hefty blow.

Farmyards, hoe-downs, roosters and fast cars.

Like *Micro Maniacs* vehicles aren't limited to cars.

BLUE LINES

Sega is looking to buy another game publisher in order to strengthen its position in the videogame market, Reuters news agency recently reported. Infogrames and THQ are two publishers said to be involved in Sega's plans. PR hoax or truth? Acclaim has issued a press release revealing that 'eccentric' *Breath of Fire* fan Jason Read, 25, is planning to spend 58 days queuing outside Electronics Boutique for the release of *Turok: Evolution* on. A place in the record books under the 'sad cases' heading is assured.

ORIENT EXCESS

Sega's three-million selling *Sakura Wars* series goes worldwide.

WITH GUNGRAVE DUE FOR release, Red Entertainment is busily prepping its popular *Sakura Wars* for PS2. Six titles are planned, starting with a remake of the original 1996 Saturn game. Set in an alternate pre-war Japan, the series sees the player commanding an Imperial defence team – six female pilots from around the world, in steam-punk mechanical armour – in a titanic battle against demonic forces. Gameplay alternates between RPG exploration, turn-based battles and dating sim-like interactions between leader Ichiro Ogami (that's you), the pilots and other cast. The better your relationship with the team, the stronger they become in battle.

Augmented by beautiful presentation, Immersive plot and popular voice actors, *Sakura Wars* is set for its sizeable multimedia onslaught. Thanks to the voice actors' star status, costumed stage musicals are held, attracting huge crowds – some punters sing and mime every stage move perfectly. Songs based on classic tunes complement the various soundtracks available. **□**



RADIO CAR CAR

First shots of *Smash Cars*, Metro 3D's radio-controlled racer.

ONCE YOU'VE CHASED the family dog around the garden a few times, most people's interest in radio-controlled cars drops off faster than a Frenchman's trousers in a bordello. But with almost every other racing licence already spoken for, it was only a matter of time before something like this came along.

Developed by Create Studio, *Smash Cars* involves racing radio controlled cars over a series of courses, but the locations will come as a bit of shock for those of you used to perfecting racing lines in more serious-minded sims. Although you won't have to worry about trying to find the perfect braking point going into Monza's S-bend, you will have to dodge all manner of oddball obstacles.

At any given moment, people or pets are liable to wander across the track, which will already be littered with all manner of obstacles – including children's toys in the garden and buried bottles on the beach. In keeping with its arcade-orientated ethos, *Smash Cars* will also feature vertiginous jumps, ludicrous speed boosts and shortcuts aplenty. We're expecting the final version to come on very much like a chase-view version of *Micro Machines*, but with Infogrames already working on a PS2 version of that very game, even with its niche subject matter *Smash Cars* may find itself up against stiff competition. **□ TC**

**Smash Cars* is due out early next year.



BLUE LINES

Konami has released first screens of its new sniper sim, *Silent Scope 3*. The third edition includes a brand new story line and as an added bonus includes all 14 missions from the arcade version, *Silent Scope EX*. Sony Online Entertainment has announced it will be working with Snow Blind Studios (creator of *Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance*) on a brand new *EverQuest* project for PS2. Infogrames has finally officially announced that *Reflections'* next project will be (surprise, surprise) *Driver 3*. The game will be released in 2003.

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PlayStation 2



XBOX





LA CONFIDENTIAL

Introducing Nick Kang, a cop with a vendetta and star of Activision's forthcoming *True Crime: Streets Of LA*.

WITH THE GETAWAY and *GTA: Vice City* ready to face-off for the title 'King Of The Crim Sims' this summer, Activision's *True Crime: Streets Of LA* is waiting in the dilapidated parking lot, ready to pull off a double-cross. Scheduled for release in 2003, *True Crime* takes elements from both games and relocates the action to Los Angeles, California, putting you in the shoes of Nick Kang, a Dirty Harry for the next generation.

After Kang is kicked off the LAPD for violence, he's re-employed as a detective in the undercover Elite Op Division. Russian and Chinese crime syndicates are taking over the city and only Kang, the hard-nosed, martial arts trained cop, is capable of bringing their reign of terror to an end. "Kang is a consummate detective, but remains a lone wolf in the department," explains Peter Morawiec, Creative Director at developer Luxoflux. "Where Nick goes, collateral damage follows."

Drawing instant comparisons with Team Soho's *The Getaway*, *True Crime* blends driving and on-foot action, set in a 400 square mile area of South California, built with painstaking care by the developer.

Morawiec claims *True Crime* will boast the largest area of accurately mapped real-life data in any game. "One of the goals was to set *True Crime* in just one city, but to make it real and very large-scale," reveals Morawiec. "A lot of initial effort went towards developing a custom city editor, which enables us to work off real-life elevation and city data and helps automate many tasks of populating such a city. We've also spent a significant amount of pre-production time cruising around LA, compiling a large photo database of all key locations." All of which may seem familiar to those following the development of *The Getaway*.

True Crime promises diverse gameplay, ranging from car chases and shoot-outs to on-foot pursuits and martial arts encounters. An unpredictable story line will also feature, incorporating 20 main missions and 100 sub-missions which pop-up on your radio. "*True Crime* is very plot-driven," adds Morawiec. "It comprises a number of sequential mission episodes which advance the plot and lead the player to one of three possible endings. Within each episode, the player will end up going

through a variety of gameplay experiences – driving to locations, racing against time, talking, fighting, shooting or just sneaking about."

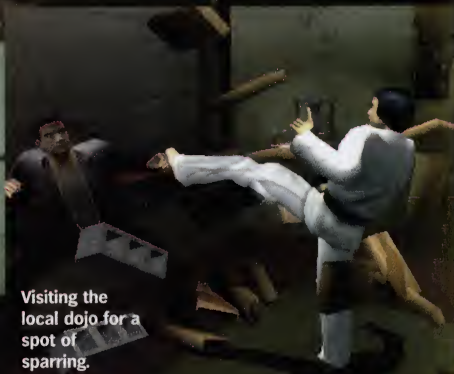
SHOWDOWN IN CHINATOWN

As an example, near the beginning of the game, Nick drives across town to visit his brother's martial arts studio and ends up in a (friendly) fight with him. Then Nick receives a call about trouble brewing in Chinatown and must race over to intercept a thug muscling the bartender. If Nick arrives too late, he'll find the bar on fire and continue down another path. Ultimately, he'll be led to a Chinatown warehouse, serving as a front for a local Triad enforcer. Nick then has to infiltrate the premises and defend himself in a massive shoot-out with the enforcer's cronies.

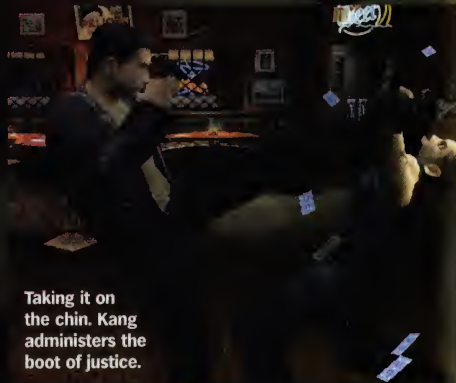
In between the story's episodes, you're freely able to explore LA, visiting gun ranges to hone your skills, buying weapons, paying mechanics for car upgrades, training at dojos and regaining stamina at a donut shop. It's these elements that should create the 'living city'.

True Crime's action sequences are unashamedly movie-inspired. Hand-to-hand fighting sequences, dramatic car chases and tense shoot-outs are all supposed to mimic scenes from an extensive list of crime flicks. "Among the many film influences are the *Lethal Weapon* and *Rush Hour* films, perhaps even some early Steven Seagal flicks," explains Morawiec. "Plus there's obvious references to Hong Kong cinema – Jet Li flicks especially." An early bar brawl scene we played at E3 demonstrated this vividly. With typically extravagant fighting and breakable environments, there's even a taste of Jackie Chan in the mix.

The arena of crime videogames is already proving a competitive one. Morawiec isn't swayed. "We are up for the challenge and feel confident that we can create a game that eclipses *GTA III* in multiple areas – gameplay features, technology, art quality and sense of realism. But we realise that at the end it's all about the fun factor – *GTA III's* strongest point." Just one question: Is it as enjoyable upholding the law as it is breaking it? **GW**



Visiting the local dojo for a spot of sparring.

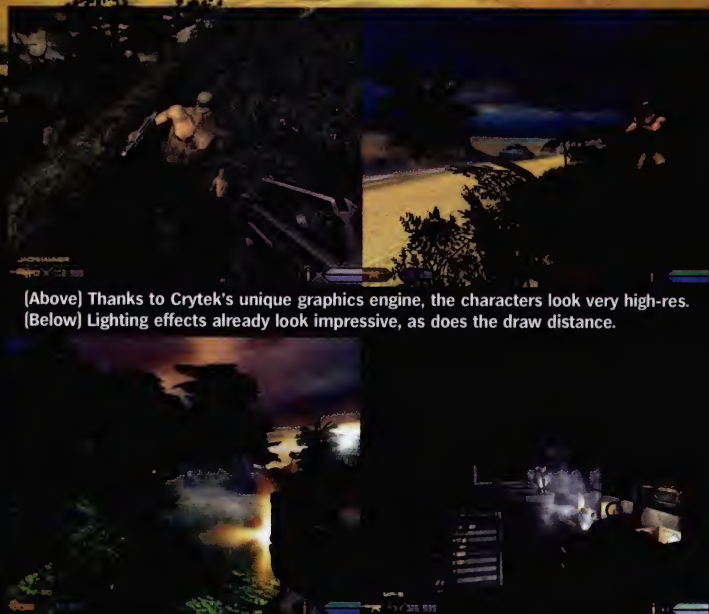


Taking it on the chin. Kang administers the boot of justice.



Kang gives David Blane a good kicking.

Framed by a gorgeous sunset, this lush jungle is home to a bloody battle.



(Above) Thanks to Crytek's unique graphics engine, the characters look very high-res.
(Below) Lighting effects already look impressive, as does the draw distance.

LET'S GO OUTSIDE

Far Cry, Ubi Soft's new FPS, steps into the great outdoors.

IT'S INCREDIBLY EARLY days yet, but we couldn't resist bringing you this sneak peek at Ubi Soft's secret new shooter. Developed by Crytek, *Far Cry* will appear on PC next spring, with a PlayStation 2 version set to follow sometime after.

The game is a squad-based affair, and from the looks of things the massive environments will be a million miles away from your usual drab corridors. These screenshots, taken from the PC version, reveal a lush tropical world populated by incredibly detailed characters. Special word must go to the astonishing draw distance: you really can see for miles. You play the part of a boat captain escorting a journalist on a special assignment, but before long the bullets are flying. Set a decade or so into the future, the

weapons set is blend of shotguns and machine pistols. More advanced gunnery becomes available as you progress and your opponents switch from human soldiers to... but that would be telling. Cough. Dinosaurs.

Far Cry actually sprang from a tech demo created to showcase Nvidia's GeForce 3 graphics card – and it shows. The sandy beaches boast impressive particle effects and the swaying grass reacts realistically to your team-mates' movements. In a refreshing change, most of *Far Cry* will be set outdoors, and with enemy AI already at benchmark quality, we're going to be slapping on the sun cream and a Kevlar vest when this hits home next year. **TC**

*A release date has yet to be announced.

BEST WESTERN

Yeeee-haaaw! It's Capcom's *Red Dead Revolver*. Saddle up and ride!

BRINGING GUNSLINGING, riding bare-back and pistols at dawn to the PS2 for the first time ever is Angel Studios' Wild West-inspired action shoot-'em-up *Red Dead Revolver*. More Sergio Leone than John Wayne, it follows the adventures of Red, the only surviving son of a family murdered by desperadoes. He was raised and taught to shoot a gun by a Red Indian, but now a mysterious gunfighter threatens his home town and he has the chance to avenge his parents' deaths.

In keeping with the game's atmospheric downbeat theme, the opening level takes place in a grey, rain-soaked outpost, with Red tackling a team of bandits ransacking an innocent woman's house. Later levels *Spy* played occurred on the dirty streets of the town and at night.

Weapons so far include a shotgun, pistols, knives and dynamite. The controls still need fine-tuning, but there's a clever zoom effect when Red draws his weapon, that places you just behind his head for ease of aim. Horse-back combat is also promised, as well as hand-to-hand brawling.

Other clever gameplay elements include your score being marked down when you shoot people in the back. Also mooted for inclusion is a Four-player Deathmatch option, something all developers should be considering. At last, the romanticism of the Wild West so adored by film-makers looks set to live on through PS2. **GW**

*Capcom's *Red Dead Revolver* is scheduled for release this Summer.



Angel Studios' Spaghetti Western meets videogame shoot-'em-up sure captures that dirty frontier mood.

screensavers

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2159438 Holly Valance - Kiss Kiss	2159454 Liquid - Sweet Harmony	2159470 Addams Family
2159439 Ashanti - Foolish	2159455 Perfecto Allstars - Pigbag	2159471 Dr Who
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2159441 Red Hot Chili Peppers - By The Way	2159457 Inner City - Good Life	2159473 Star Wars
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2159443 J.Lo - I'm Gonna Be Alright	2159459 DMX - Ruff Ryders	2159475 Thunderbirds
2159444 Shakira - Whenever, Wherever	2159460 New Order - Bizarre Love	2159476 Godfather
2159445 Beyonce Knowles - Work It Out	2159461 Artful Dodger - Please	2159477 Danger mouse
2159446 Chad Kroeger - Hero	2159462 Jakatta - So lonely	2159478 Roobarb & Custard
2159447 A1 - Caught In The Middle	2159463 Robin S - Show me Love	2159479 Muppet Show
		2159480 Rainbow

old skool tones	tw/film themes
2159443 J.Lo - I'm Gonna Be Alright	2159475 Thunderbirds
2159444 Shakira - Whenever, Wherever	2159476 Godfather
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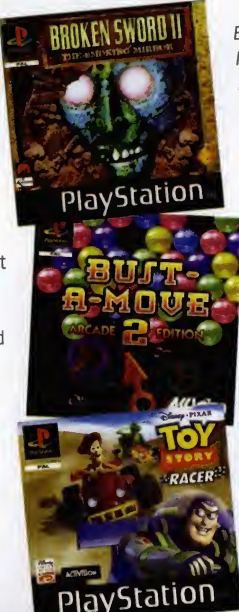
RETRO HEAVEN

"Pong? What's That?" Find out in our new monthly history lesson.

EBAY IS A BARGAIN
HUNTER'S paradise, and often your best bet to find obscure items. There are thousands of games, consoles and accessories listed every day.

In this new column, OPS2 will examine a different retro console every month. We'll start with PlayStation. Common PlayStation games on eBay usually go for between \$10 and \$30. Whether its classics like Metal Gear Solid and Tekken 3 or rubbish like Rugrats and Simpsons Wrestling, prices are similar. However, hard-to-find titles are starting to increase in price as retailers start pulling titles off the shelves.

Recent examples include



Broken Sword 2 (\$80) Front Mission 3 (\$77) Toy Story Racer (\$56) Bust a Move 2 (\$43) Mortal Kombat 3 (\$50) GTA 2 (\$43) Bust a Groove (\$75) Bomberman World (\$35) Darkstalkers 3 (\$41) Legend of Dagoon (\$50) Namco Museum (\$49) Devil Dice (\$48) and Castlevania (\$107)

High-profile games that weren't released on PAL format like Square titles Chrono Cross, Xenogears, Legend of Mana and Chrono Trigger also command big prices. PlayStation consoles tend to sell for around \$100 for a machine with half a dozen games. Portable PSOne units attract slightly higher prices. □ JH

NOT SO JOLLY

Veteran games writer, Narayan Pattison, has written for every major publication in the field. He now runs an independent games store.

EVERYONE SEEMS TO have their own thoughts about software piracy, and naturally these opinions range from acceptance to vehement opposition. Whatever you think, videogames are supposed to be about fun. The fact that people even discuss the black market side of things is a sad affair.

Pick a random mate, and they'll either declare that "only crazy people and losers pay \$100 when you can pick up the same game for \$25" or they'll be on the other side of the fence and explain the problems of piracy.

It seems so simple but it really isn't. Not only will you risk being a winner on Merrick and Rosso's *Tight Ass Tuesday*, but supporting piracy has many other effects.

Games developers aim to make games. Yes, they're also after profits, but what happens when a company invests millions into an amazing new adventure only to find that pirates all over the world are selling illegal versions? The developers lose out and decide instead to release cheap and simple games in the future.

Take *GTA: Vice City* for example. If everyone only bought a pirated version of *GTA III*, do you think Rockstar would have bothered investing half as much time and money as it has into this masterpiece? Who loses out now?

Piracy affects the industry on all fronts. It

makes it harder for retailers to break even, and forces them to keep prices high to cover losses.

It's estimated that piracy costs the Australian industry \$46 million every year! We know for a fact that many of our readers would like to get a job within the games industry, but if everyone else has to foot the bill for your games, then the industry will never grow. That translates into a lot less jobs for everyone.

Even after the recent decision legalising modifications, copying games for commercial gain is still illegal. What gives Dodgy Sam the right to make a living off a games company just because he owns a CD burner? Buying games from Sam is helping him, not you!

These are extreme, but they are far closer to reality than you realise. Support the industry that provides such unique experiences!





incoming

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inform

PSONE AUGUST TOP 20 GAMES

RANK	TITLE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER
01	Harry Potter	Adventure	EA
02	Digimon Rumble Arena	Battle	Infogrames
03	Monsters Inc	Adventure	Sony
04	Delta Force: Urban Warfare	Shooter	EA
05	Barbie Explorer	Adventure	Mattel
06	Final Fantasy Anthology	RPG	Square
07	Who Wants to be a Millionaire?	Quiz	Eidos
08	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2	Sports	Activision
09	Digimon	Adventure	Infogrames
10	Games Triple Pack	Variety	THQ
11	Peter Pan	Adventure	Sony
12	Rayman Rush	Beat 'em up	THQ
13	Peter Pan	Adventure	Sony
14	Capcom Vs SNK Pro	Beat 'em up	THQ
15	20 Games Pack	Variety	Midas
16	Atlantis The Lost Empire	Platform	Disney
17	Formula One Arcade	Racing	Sony
18	FIFA 2002 World Cup	Sports	EA
19	NBA Live 2002 Gold	Sports	EA
20	MIB Crashdown	Adventure	Infogrames

PS2 AUGUST TOP 20 GAMES

RANK	TITLE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER
01	V8 Supercar Race Driver	Racing	Codemasters
02	Medal of Honor: Frontline	FPS	EA
03	Grand Theft Auto III	Adventure	Take 2
04	Gran Turismo 2002 Concept	Racing	Sony
05	Final Fantasy X	RPG	Square
06	Spider-Man	Adventure	Activision
07	Vampire Night	Shooter	Namco
08	Crash Bandicoot 5	Platform	Universal
09	Smash Court Tennis Pro	Sports	Sony
10	Freekstyle	Racing	EA
11	Metal Gear Solid 2	Adventure	Konami
12	V-Rally 3	Racing	Infogrames
13	Dynasty Warriors 3	Strategy	Koei
14	007 Agent Under Fire	FPS	EA
15	Britney's Dance Beat	Music	THQ
16	Jak & Daxter	Platform	Sony
17	Devil May Cry	Action	Capcom
18	Tiger Woods PGA USA Tour 2002	Sports	EA
19	Simpson's Road Rage	Driving	EA
20	Scooby-Doo: Night of 100 Frights	Adventure	THQ

PSONE RELEASE SCHEDULE

November

Title	Category	Publisher
Pink Panther	Adventure	Wanadoo
Harry Potter Chamber of Secrets	Platform	EA
NBA Live 2003	Sports	EA
Digimon World 2003	Action	Infogrames
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4	Sports	Activision
Pink Panther	Adventure	Wanadoo

December

Title	Category	Publisher
Bratz	Adventure	Ubi Soft

PS2 RELEASE SCHEDULE

October

Title	Category	Publisher
Eggo Mania	Puzzle	Acclaim
Gravity Games	Sports	Acclaim
Legion Legend of Excalibur	Action	Acclaim
Reign of Fire	Adventure	Acclaim
Batman: Dark Tomorrow	Adventure	Kemco
Ecks Vs Sever	Platform	Kemco
Grand Theft Auto: Vice City	Adventure	Rockstar
Formula One 2002	Racing	Sony
Ninja Assault	Action	Sony
Space Channel 5 v.2	Music	Sony
Run Like Hell	Action	Interplay
TimeSplitters 2	FPS	Eidos
Hitman 2	Action	Eidos
Colin McRae Rally 3.0	Racing	Codemasters
The Terminator	Action	Infogrames
Taz Wanted	Platform	Infogrames
Sega Soccer Slam	Sports	Sega
Sum of all Fears	Adventure	Ubi Soft
Tom and Jerry: War of the Whiskers	Adventure	Ubi Soft
Wizardry: Tales of the Forsaken Land	RPG	Ubi Soft
Chessmaster 9000	Chess	Ubi Soft
Metropolismania	Puzzle	Ubi Soft
FIFA 2003	Sports	EA
Need for Speed: Hot Pursuit 2	Racing	EA
Onimusha 2: Samurai's Destiny	Adventure	Capcom
Summoner 2	Adventure	THQ

November

Title	Category	Publisher
Burnout 2	Racing	Acclaim
Legends of Wrestling	Wrestling	Acclaim
Powerpuff Girls	Platform	Acclaim
Vexx	Platform	Acclaim
Sega Soccer Slam	Sports	Sega
Rocket Power: Beach Bandits	Kids Arcade	THQ
Jimmy Neutron Boy Genius	Kids Arcade	THQ
Chopflipper: New Era	Flight	THQ
Hot Wheels Velocity X	Racing	THQ

PS2 RELEASE SCHEDULE

Title	Category	Publisher
WWE Smackdown: Shut Your Mouth!	Wrestling	THQ
Red Faction II	FPS	THQ
Dynasty Warriors Tactics	Strategy	THQ
Auto Modellista	Racing	Capcom
Marvel Vs Capcom	Beat 'em up	Capcom
Halloween	Adventure	Wanadoo
Inquisition	Adventure	Wanadoo
Tomb Raider: Angel of Darkness	Adventure	Eidos
Micro Machines	racing	Infogrames
Dragonball Z Fighters	Beat 'em up	Infogrames
Superman: Shadow of Apokolips	Adventure	Infogrames
Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon	FPS	Ubi Soft
Rayman 3	Platform	Ubi Soft
Villeneuve Racing	Racing	Ubi Soft
ET: Return to the Green Planet	Adventure	Ubi Soft
The Lost	Adventure	Ubi Soft
The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers	Action	EA
The Sims	Simulation	EA
Harry Potter Chamber of Secrets	Platform	EA
Star Wars: Bounty Hunter	Action	EA
Star Wars: Clone Wars	Action	EA
Bond 007: Nightfire	FPS	EA
Ty the Tasmanian Tiger	Platform	EA
Simpson's Skateboarding	Sports	EA
Gladiator Wrestling	Wrestling	EA
NBA Live 2003	Sports	EA
Delta Force: Land Warrior	Shooter	Novalogic
Marvel Vs Capcom 2	Beat 'em up	Capcom
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4	Sports	Activision
Wreckless	Racing	Activision
Minority Report	Adventure	Activision
X-Men: Next Dimension	Beat 'em up	Activision
Star Wars: Jedi Knight 2	Action	Activision
Gungrave	Shooter	Activision
Rally Fusion: Race of Champions	Racing	Activision

December

Title	Category	Publisher
Dave Mirra XXX	Sports	Acclaim
Alex Ferguson's Player Manager	Management	Ubi Soft
Ratchet and Clank	Platform	Sony
The Getaway	Adventure	Sony
Soul Calibur 2	Beat 'em up	Sony
Spyro: Enter the Dragonfly	Platform	Vivendi

January/Early 2003

Title	Category	Publisher
Midnight Club 2	Racing	Rockstar
Celebrity Deathmatch	Beat 'em up	Take 2
PlanetSide	Adventure	Ubi Soft
Rainbow Six: Raven Shield	FPS	Ubi Soft
XIII	Action	Ubi Soft
Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon	Adventure	Ubi Soft
Project B, G and E	Adventure	Ubi Soft
Sly Raccoon	Platform	Sony
Ape Escape 2	Platform	Sony
Primal	Adventure	Sony

WORDS: PAUL FITZPATRICK/IMAGE: MARTIN BURTON

GAVIN RAE BURN

After repeatedly pushing the PSone to its limit with the body panel pummelling realism of TOCA racing series Producer Gavin Raeburn is now giving the PS2 a workout with V8 Supercars.

Curriculum Vitae

Name: Gavin Raeburn
Job title: Head of Studio and Producer of the *Race Driver* series.

Date of birth: 26/04/68
Place of birth: Newcastle, England

Gameography: *Thunderbolt*, *Pro Skateboard Simulator*, *Laser Force*, *Pro Tennis Simulator*, *Rally Cross Simulator* (all Commodore 64), *Psycho Pinball* (PC), *TOCA Touring Car Championship*, *TOCA 2*, *TOCA World Touring Cars* (all PSone), among others. Raeburn also composed the music for around 20 early Codemasters releases, including many of the *Dizzy* games, *Robin Hood* and *Firehawk*.

Hobbies: Playing the keyboard (at his home recording studio), watching sci-fi or thriller films.



When it comes to hardcore videogame racing, Formula One certainly has its fans, but for serious petrol heads who also like to enjoy themselves, the

TOCA PSone games have long been the daddy of the track. With its supercharged cars, tension-filled pack racing and 'man from the boys' realism, touring car racing is the perfect antidote to sterile driving sims. With Codemasters' latest *V8 Supercar Race Driver* title out on PS2 this month, we caught up with the man behind the series, Producer Gavin Raeburn, and asked him about *Race Driver*, the competition – and Bob Hoskins...

V8 Supercar Race Driver is a pretty radical overhaul of the series. Did you sit down and decide which aspects of driving games you wanted to change in general, or was it more a case of focusing on how TOCA should evolve?

Race Driver is the fourth title in the series, so we did as we do with any of our games and looked at every competing title to see what they were currently doing and where the result was heading. We found that most racing games were getting stuck in a rut. And one of the main reasons for this was that they were lacking in the personality you see in real life sports. In Formula One, for instance, you've got Schumacher, but no F1 game seems to have him positioned prominently. That seems crazy. So what we wanted to do with *Race Driver* is get that characterisation in. To give a bit more of a human touch to the game.

Where would you say V8 Supercar Race Driver sits alongside a game like Gran Turismo 3?

We're not competing with *GT3* really. We're a pack racing game based on good AI, close racing and damage. That's something that *GT* isn't. In many ways, *GT* is more of a 'collect-em-up'. You collect a new car, race for a bit and you get another car. It's very, very different to what we're doing, so even though the games are in the same genre, they're poles apart really.

How have you gone about developing the AI for Ryan's opponents?

The AI itself has been in development since the early days of *TOCA*. We've added and changed elements over the years, but good AI is hard to implement. The easy way to do it is to have cars just following lines, but in real life you have the width of the road to use.

And though you do stay on the racing line most of the time, when it comes to overtaking and undertaking, there are all sorts of different techniques. And if you don't have a good adaptive system that can look far enough ahead and judge the condition of the road, you can't really let the AI push the physics to the limit.

The context-based menus, the cut-scenes and the story really give the game warmth. Have you achieved everything you set out to do in this area?

This is the first step with the Story mode. We knew it was the way forward for racing games. I guess whether or not we've achieved that is down to the public to decide. But certainly I feel it's the right way forward. We've learned some lessons along the way, and on the whole we're very pleased with the way it's turned out.

"We were thinking about Bob Hoskins to voice the crew chief. We decided it wasn't going to add much to the game"

What kind of lessons have you learned?

The main difficulty we had was the fact that you can go anywhere in the game. It's an open structure and you can go from championship to championship at any time. Now, most story-led games will have just FMVs playing. We couldn't do that. We had to have scenes play live at each location. It's got the added benefit that you then see the car you've been racing and you see the track you've been racing on within that scene. But from the production point of view, you've got lots of different scenarios to test. That's probably been the biggest difficulty we've had, making sure all the scenes work.

Can you tell us about the motion capture process you used for the cut scenes?

There are two sides to this. The technology used for motion capture moves forward at such an alarming pace, but at the same time it's still very difficult to have motion capture done for a body and

a face at the same time. Particularly if there's more than one person in a scene. It makes it difficult for the actors to act naturally if they have to do all the bits separately. In *Race Driver*, the actors were filmed in the scene at the same time. They all acted and spoke and it makes the scenes much more natural. We also got in a director as well to lay down the scenes beforehand, so we could emulate real camera movements.

Did you ever consider getting stars to do voices in the game?

We did. We were thinking about Bob Hoskins to voice the crew chief. But we decided it wasn't going to add much to the game. Next time we'd like to do it. I'd like to get the faces in there, too.

In a fantasy world with unlimited time, money and talent, what would you like to incorporate into the racing world?

I'd like to use more of the licensed drivers in the game: actually put them in so they can be walking around and talking. But then you're getting into the realm of image rights and that's quite an expensive thing to do.

What would you identify as the key bad habits of other driving games?

On the face of it, a driving game is potentially the easiest game to create: if you want to get a car on a track following AI lines, you'll get something that looks like a real racing game. But when you look a bit deeper, all the complexity of a good racing game comes in the physics, the damage and so on. It's not just the car physics, it's the link between the physics and the player. That's what I see is quite often missing. A car should feel as natural to drive in a game as it does in real life.

So far with TOCA, each game has marked a leap beyond the previous title. Is the concept pretty much perfect now?

Oh no. There's still a way to go. We've been talking about ideas for *Race Driver 2*. There are some really nice ideas flying around that we'd like to put in there which I think would surprise a few people. We're looking at more varied racing types, and working on perhaps... no, I'd better not say...

Of the 30 plus cars that feature in Race Driver, what's your personal favourite?

I'd have to say it's one of the simplest to drive: the MG Lola Le Mans. That's also because it's just so fast. If you're driving the Lola at Monza it's like entering warp speed. It's incredible! I really like that. □



Race Driver: Plenty of cars to master besides the mighty V8.



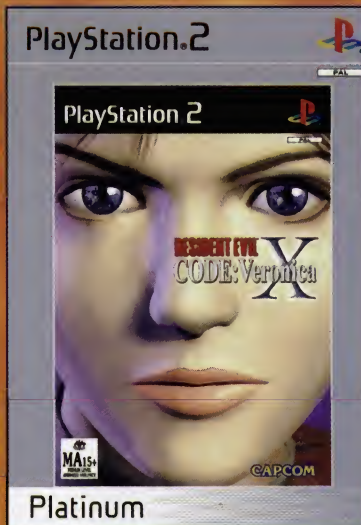
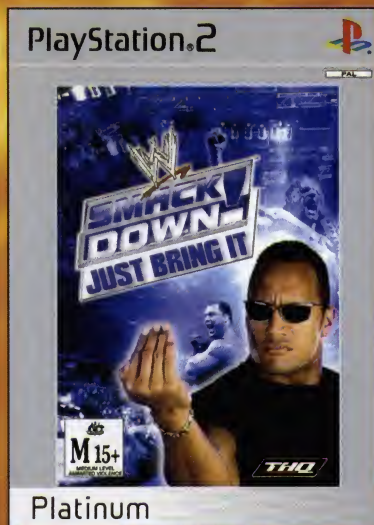
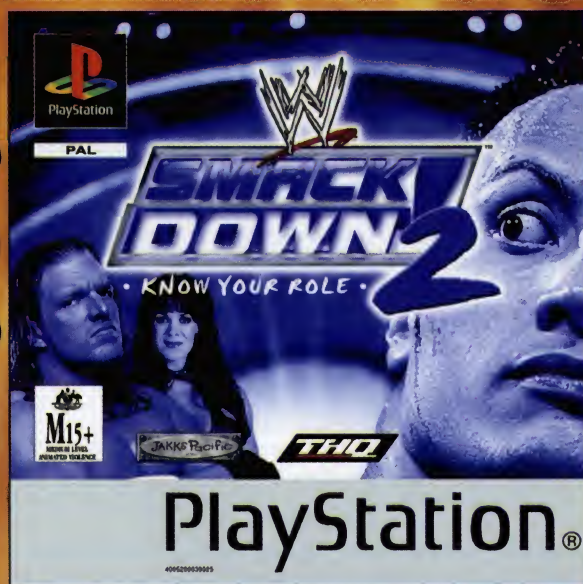
Rude drivers are Raeburn's real-life pet hate: "Anyone who sticks their fingers up really winds me up!"

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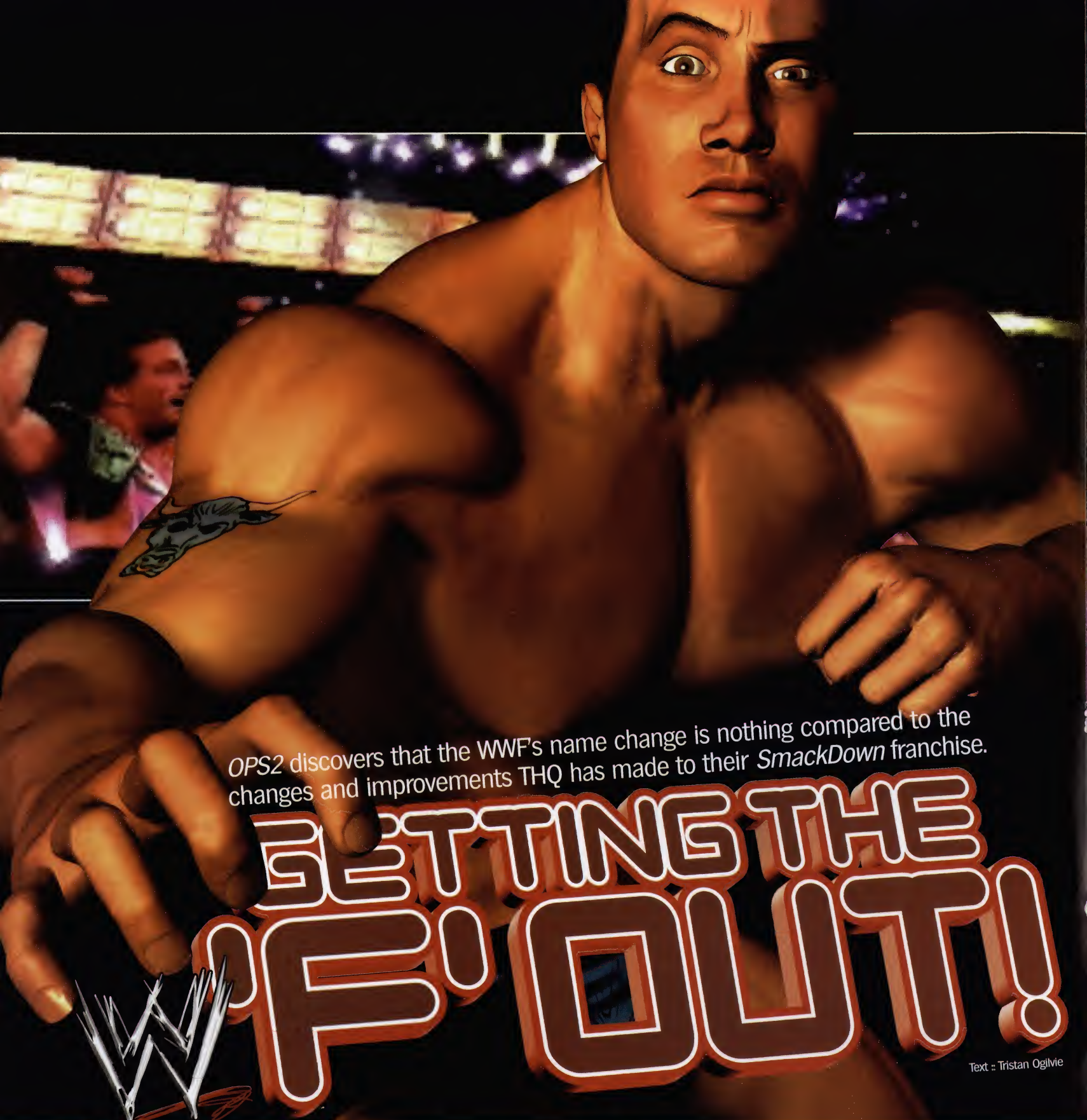
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OPS2 discovers that the WWF's name change is nothing compared to the changes and improvements THQ has made to their *SmackDown* franchise.

GETTING THE WF' OUT!

Text : Tristan Oglvie

A History of wrestling videogames



1986 - Atari 2600 - Title Match Pro Wrestling (Activision)
The birth of random button mashing in wrestling games, although in this case you only had to deal with one button. Had a bug in the programming that favoured the player on the left side of the screen!



1988 - NES - WWF Wrestlemania (Acclaim)
Unresponsive controls and limited moves meant more wrestling with the controller than any action on screen. Featured a roster of only 6 WWF Superstars.



1989 - PC Engine - Fire Pro Wrestling (Human)
Even without a license from a major wrestling corporation, the *Fire Pro Wrestling* franchise has appeared on SNES, Sega Megadrive, PSOne, Saturn and Gameboy Advance. Very popular with a dedicated online fanclub!



1990 - Nintendo Gameboy - WWF Superstars (Acclaim)
Just wrestling in four shades of grey, but this was one of the first games created by genius game makers Rare, who went on to make *Goldeneye* for the N64.



1991 - Super Nintendo - WWF Super Wrestlemania (Acclaim)
Introduced a grapple metre whereby the player with the strongest thumbs always won.



1993 - Arcade - Saturday Night Slam Masters (Capcom)
An over the top arcade wrestler that allowed you to pit Hagar from *Final Fight* against a number of other fictitious grapplers. Fun.

THE NEXT BIG THING

Questions and answers with the new bad boy of the *WWE*, Brock Lesnar, on the eve of his Triple Threat title match with The Rock and Triple H.

What is your background?

I grew up on a small dairy farm in South Dakota in the US. I then travelled to Minneapolis to go to the University of Minnesota where I became the NCAA champion in amateur wrestling. It's really been a great ride.

Obviously you had a very successful career in amateur wrestling. How did you view professional wrestling when you were involved in amateur wrestling?

I didn't watch any professional wrestling until 1998 and the thought of any amateur wrestler watching professional wrestling was taboo. So I wasn't a big fan of it and I didn't watch any of it. For me, it was kind of a slap in the face for all amateur wrestlers, because the professional wrestling gets more publicity than amateur wrestling and we thought "well it's fake and they don't put the hard work in like we do". So amateur wrestlers were kind of bitter towards professional wrestling. However once Kurt Angle broke the scene and started to become successful in this business it kind of opened my eyes, and then the *WWE* contacted me. When I went to my first live show I felt the fans, the electricity and the intensity and it was something I wanted to be around.


So has your opinion of professional wrestling changed since you've become a professional wrestler?

Yeah definitely. The business has changed tremendously and amateur wrestling is starting to change and become more open and willing to accept professional wrestling because of Kurt Angle and me. I think they are benefiting from both sides of the wrestling world.

Who is your biggest rival? Who would you really like to beat?

I'm really looking forward to wrestling Kurt Angle. I hope to have bout with him within the next six to eight months, hopefully at *Wrestlemania*. I'd really love to kick his ass!

The *WWE* is more popular than ever. When you visit countries outside of the US, are you surprised at the response from the fans?

Yeah. It's almost overwhelming sometimes but ultimately it is very rewarding. The fans are great and particularly the fans in Australia are very nice; they're certainly the nicest fans I've ever encountered. 



"I am the Greatest..."



When *WWE SmackDown! Just Bring It!* was released last November, few doubted it would be a success. After all, THQ's wrestling games have raked in over \$270 million since 1999. But while Yuke's Entertainment delivered a solid interpretation of the flamboyant wrestling antics of the *WWE*, the game failed to live up to some expectations.

This is why Yuke's has paid such attention to its latest offering in the series, *WWE Smackdown! Shut Your Mouth!* The name may have changed because of legal wrangles with the World Wildlife Fund (who now own the name *WWE*) but the title remains firmly committed to reproducing all the sweaty histrionics of a wrestling bout, except this time with more style and graphical flair.

MAKING SWEATY MEN LOOK PRETTY

From the moment your chosen grappler jumps into the arena, it's obvious that Yuke's has worked hard on the visuals. Even the crowd looks better, with the first four rows of fans now drawn in 3D. The wrestler models are made up of 3,000 polygons each and feature more facial animation than in any previous *SmackDown* game – you can even see the wrinkles on Hulk Hogan's face! Yuke's has also been working steadily to add some special effects like highlights, which will be used to mimic sweat on the wrestlers' bodies. Yuke's is bringing wrestling fans closer to their heroes than ever without actually making us smell just exactly what The Rock is 'cooking'.

The move and taunt animations are much smoother, particularly when performing combos. Indeed, the faces and features look so realistic; it's sometimes easy to forget

you're watching a videogame. Seriously. During a fight playing as Lita, for instance, we were surprised to see individual strands of hair falling around her face as she's flung about the ring. The quality of the animation also lends itself to the slightly enhanced reversal system. Rather than just pressing one button, you now hold down the button down and push the control stick in one of four directions to perform a different counter. You can counter punches, kicks, and holds and can also finishers. In fact, you can even perform another wrestler's finisher, so theoretically Brock Lesnar could perform a "Rock Bottom".

MAKING FAKE PUNCHES LOOK REAL

There's a more satisfying feeling of contact when slapping, kicking and bouncing off the ropes. Equally cool is the way a wrestler reacts to a blow or hold, visibly wincing in pain and grasping the affected area in agony. From pile drivers to suplexes, the transition from one move to the next is nearly seamless, and it really makes *Shut Your Mouth!* play differently from previous games *SmackDown* games. Less obvious improvements, such as light sourcing and shadows, further enhance the game's sense of realism.

The entrance of the wrestlers before a match has been tweaked to give new authenticity. The animation is superbly accurate; Hulk Hogan strums his air guitar and calls to the crowd, Shawn Michaels does his dance and DDP does his trademark Diamond-Cutter gesture. After complaints about the quality of entrance music in the last game, THQ assures us that there will be no such issues here. Each and every wrestler will come out with their correct



1994 - Super Nintendo - *Wrestle & Romance* (Jaleco)
Didn't see the light of day outside of Japan. Maybe it had something to do with the title, or perhaps it was the seemingly redundant extra views of the action onscreen.



1994 - Super Nintendo - *WCW Super Brawl* (Beam Software)
Released when *WCW* had overtaken the *WWE* in the popularity stakes, featured an isometric viewpoint but not much else new.



1998 - PSOne - *WCW Nitro* (THQ)
Appalling collision detection and wrestlers that seemed to defy gravity. And some guy who looked like 'The Crow'.



2000 - PSOne - *WWE SmackDown* (THQ)
The first *WWE* game not published by Acclaim. A huge list of modes and options gave it more depth than was previously expected of a wrestling title.

WWE SMACKDOWN! SHUT YOUR MOUTH!



☞ So what can fans expect from Brock Lesnar in the future?

You can expect a great show from me with a lot of intensity and you're going to see lots of bodies hitting the floor.

Is it sometimes hard to separate yourself from the bad boy persona you take on in the ring?

Not at all, the character that I am when I wrestle is just the result of amplifying my personal character maybe ten or fifteen per cent. I'm a very intense individual; that's how I wrestled as an amateur and that's how I wrestle professionally.

What is it like backstage at the wrestling? Can you give us an insight to the relationships between wrestlers; does the aggression in the ring ever get taken out backstage?

No, no. It's just like any other locker room pretty much. Lots of towel flicking and stuff (laughs). We're all a great bunch of guys and everybody's really likeable. We're a fun group. We're pretty much a family; we travel a lot together so you pick out certain individuals on the road you can trust and develop some great relationships with them.

Do you know much about Australian sports?

Not really. I notice a lot of American sports are aired over here in Australia. But I've watched a lot of rugby before; I had some friends in college who played so I can relate to Australian football somewhat.

WWE SmackDown! Shut Your Mouth! is the first wrestling game to feature you. Do you enjoy playing wrestling videogames?

Actually I've never played any wrestling games! I don't play videogames because if I lose, I usually end up trying to break the controller because I'm very competitive and I don't have the patience (laughs). But I imagine that I will have the opportunity to play the game and who knows - I just picked up reading, so I might pick up playing PlayStation! ■

☞ signature music playing. Kurt Angle's entrance even has the "You suck" crowd chant as his music plays.

MAKING THEIR SMACKDOWN DEBUT

New wrestlers on board include Rob Van Dam, Shawn Stasiak, Brock Lesnar, Booker T, Ric Flair, Hulk Hogan and Stacy Keibler. After pitting the two latter names together for a test match, we noticed that rather than block Keibler's punches, Hogan takes them square on the jaw and then waves his finger in the air as if to defiantly tell his rival 'Don't do that again'. However, if you get bored of the real WWE stars, the excellent Create-A-Wrestler mode of *Just Bring It* makes a welcome return, with even more variables on offer. You'll be able to edit facial and body animations, morph different parts of the wrestler's body to your liking, and even place tattoos anywhere you want. Undoubtedly one of the coolest and most innovative features of the mode is that after you've created your wrestler, the game will give you a password that allows you to instantly re-create the same wrestler.

Fans are definitely spoilt this year with the number of options on offer in *Shut Your Mouth!*. Yuke's has added variety to the old one-on-one exhibition matches by allowing you to decide whether you want to attack the other wrestler while he/she is on the ground or just leave the ring after the match. In addition to one-on-ones, you'll have access to Hell in a Cell, Elimination Tag, Steel Cage, Lumberjack, Stages of Hell, Tornado Six-Man Tag and more. But perhaps the most important mode in *Shut Your Mouth!* will be the Season option. At the beginning of the season, you'll have to go through the draft and decide which wrestlers appear on various WWE shows. For example, you can have Brock Lesnar, The Hurricane, and members of the NWO on *Raw*, and then place Hogan, The Rock, Triple H, and Kurt Angle on *SmackDown*. In addition, each wrestler will have an individual rating (with any created wrestlers starting out at the bottom

of the rankings), which seemingly comes into play as the season progresses, as it will determine who you have matches with and whether or not you make it into certain pay-per-view events like *WrestleMania*. The season mode will cover the last year of WWE programming, so you'll see some familiar events such as the drama surrounding Stone Cold's draft decision and the return of the NWO (without Scott Hall, who will not be included in the game).

MAKING GOOD USE OF THEIR SURROUNDINGS

Of course, wrestling within the constrictions of the ring has become so passé there are around 15 backstage and special areas in *Shut Your Mouth!*. You'll be able to fight inside The World (the WWE's restaurant complex in New York), out in the streets (with pedestrian and vehicle traffic), in the subways and even on trains. Yuke's has also added more interactivity with the backgrounds - pipes, boxes and glass will break. Improvements have been made to the weapons as well. You can use the fire extinguisher to spray flame retardant or set up a chair on the floor and perform a DDT or a similar move onto it. You can even ride the Undertaker's motorbike around! Unfortunately, you won't be able to fight in the crowds but you can perform moves off the barriers. Some wrestlers will even execute special moves. For example, Rob Van Dam can perform the five-star frog splash on the *SmackDown* set.

There will be commentary in the game, but it won't be play-by-play. Instead, all four of the WWE's voices: Jim Ross, Jerry 'The King' Lawler, Tazz and Michael Cole will provide color-style commentary.

Initially worried that Yuke's might not improve on its last effort (especially given its last game was the not-very-good *Eve of Extinction*) we're happy to report that *Shut Your Mouth!* is looking impressive. The prospect of laying the *SmackDown* has never been so enticing. Mmmm. ■

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Pure combat. Pure action.**

Global warming threatens life on earth. Frozen regions of Siberia have melted, submerging entire countries. As part of an elite group of pilots assembled by the World Alliance, your mission is to take out the World Order Reorganization Front, an organization that exploits natural disasters for its own benefit. Prepare for take off.

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Elite Pilot : Team SW



Experience G-Force using the controller.



Choose from 4 views: cockpit, cockpit without meter, small and large.



Engage multiple enemies in a variety of death-defying missions.



PlayStation®2

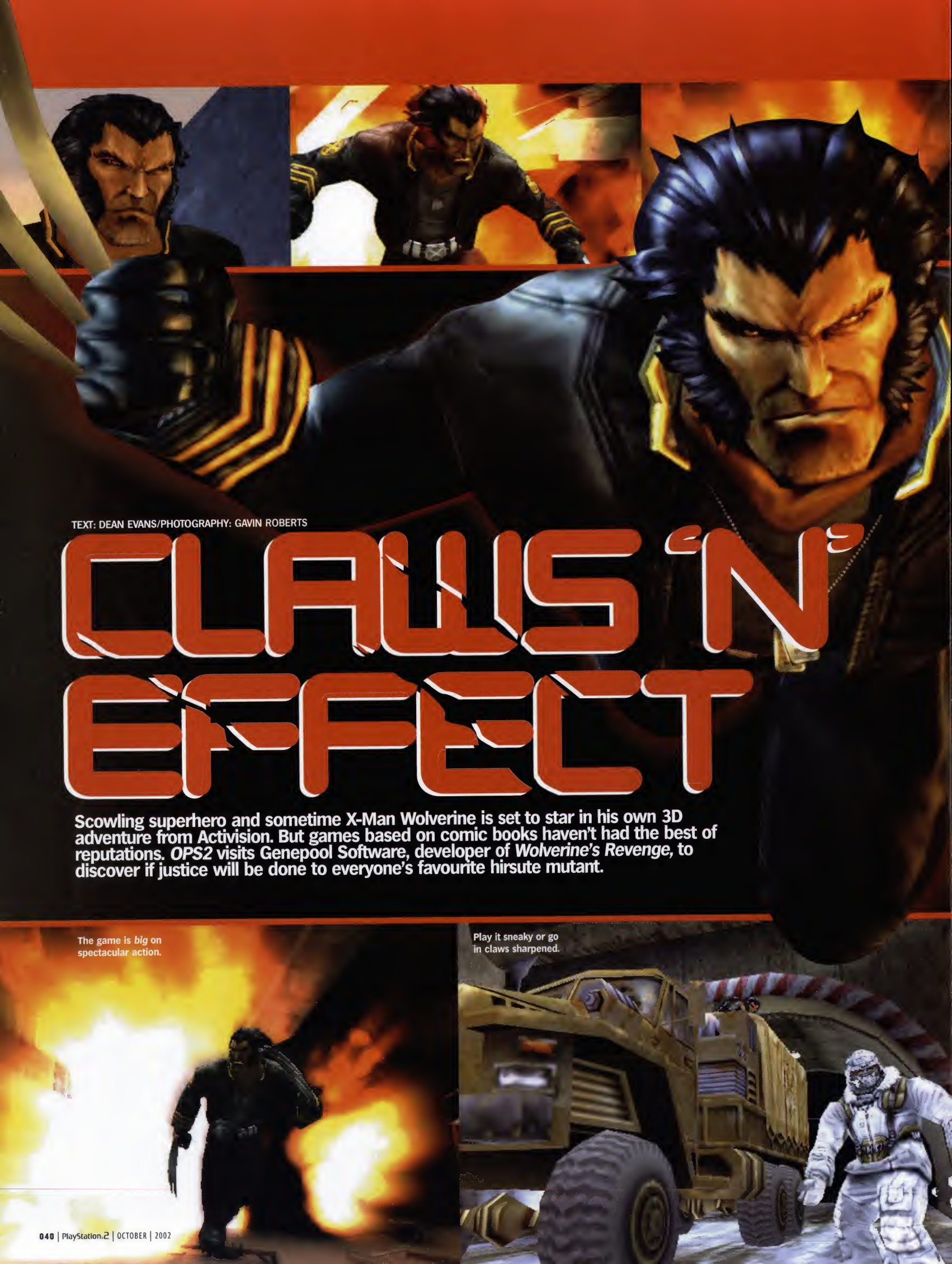


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THQ

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TEXT: DEAN EVANS/PHOTOGRAPHY: GAVIN ROBERTS

CLAWS 'N' EFFECT

Scowling superhero and sometime X-Man Wolverine is set to star in his own 3D adventure from Activision. But games based on comic books haven't had the best of reputations. *OPS2* visits Genepool Software, developer of *Wolverine's Revenge*, to discover if justice will be done to everyone's favourite hirsute mutant.

The game is *big* on spectacular action.

Play it sneaky or go in claws sharpened.

WOLVERINE'S REVENGE



Of all the X-Men, Wolverine is arguably the most videogame-friendly. He's a man with a mysterious past, and therefore comes with a ready-made 'who am I?' plot. As a one-time assassin, his abilities peg him as perfect 3D adventurer material – an expert in close-quarters combat, incredible healing properties, enhanced senses, an adamantium-laced skeleton and retractable claws. A game based on fellow mutant Cyclops would simply be a shallow 3D shooter while Jean Grey's telepathic abilities only lend themselves to a giant X-Men version of *Tetris*. Something based on Storm could be interesting; the ability to unleash *Colin McRae Rally 3*-style weather effects would be very pretty, but it's hardly got the makings for lasting gameplay.

Wolverine, on the other hand, is a one-man army. In his current comic incarnation, and like Hugh Jackman's portrayal of him in the *X-Men* movie, Wolverine is less a spandex-clad vigilante and more a scowling biker anti-hero. *Wolverine's Revenge* hopes to take advantage of this moody magnificence. While the game mechanics sound like standard fare (third-person view, jumping, fighting, object collection) the game itself is anything but. Even now this 3D combat adventure is blessed with fantastically detailed graphics, a dark design and an intuitive, satisfyingly acrobatic combat system. The game's developer, Genepool Software, is

Enemies won't get far attacking Wolverine on their own, so AI will make them gang up or attack with big weapons like flamethrowers

building eight huge levels, each one dotted with puzzles, populated by enemy guards (with night-vision goggles, body armour and so on) and protected by super villains.

Although *Wolverine's Revenge* isn't due for release by Activision until 2003, OPS2 recently infiltrated the Genepool HQ to hunt for more information. There we found Development Manager Craig Houston and forced him to spill the genetically modified beans on his latest project.

X-MAN

The 3D adventure genre is an overcrowded one, so with *Wolverine's Revenge* Genepool is trying to do something a little bit different from the rest of the pack. Designed to embrace Wolverine's abilities, the game features a powerful superhero storming his way through a massively



Wolverine will have special moves to add to his hack 'n' slash combat.



Juggernaut. Don't touch his helmet...

WOLVERINE'S REVENGE

Not a blue/yellow
leotard in sight...



HAPPY AS LARRY

The script of *Wolverine's Revenge* was penned by comic industry veteran, Larry Hama.

Hama began his writing/editing career working on *Crazy Magazine* at Marvel. From this humble beginning, he went on to write all 155 issues of *GI Joe: A Real American Hero* between 1982 and 1994. After the roaring success of *GI Joe*, Hama was asked to breathe life into the slumping *Wolverine* series and was responsible for much of the detail concerning the character's history, Department H and the Weapon X program.

After stints on *Daredevil*, *Conan*, *Batman* and *Gen X*, Hama plans a new four-shot *Wolverine* series entitled *Logan*, Year Zero. Trivia buffs may be interested to learn that Hama played a Korean soldier in an episode of *M*A*S*H* ('Korean Surgeon') and has been quoted as saying that his dream comic project would be a fantasy series entitled *The Ghost Of Elvis vs The Killer Bimbos From Beyond the Bermuda Triangle*.



□ forefront, backed by an intriguing and surprising story line. In the game, Wolverine discovers that the same shadowy Department H that laced his bones with adamantium also implanted him with a fail-safe killer virus. Due to his natural mutant healing, Wolverine has not been aware of its existence. However, at the beginning of the game the virus has become active and with only 48 hours to live, he returns to seek the scientists that created him in the hope of finding a cure...

X-CITEMENT

A criticism that's often been levelled at 3D combat adventures is that the way you play one level is the method you use to play them all. There are few surprises. So the most important design element in developing *Wolverine's Revenge* is variation. "We've planned eight levels, including both indoor and outdoor environments – claustrophobic prisons and caves on the one hand, sprawling military bases and forests on the other," explains Houston. "Throughout the game, Wolverine has access to a range of standard and special moves – big, choreographed combat sequences that can be executed quickly and easily. The characters on the early levels are generally soldiers and guards, mere mortals. But as the game progresses, Wolverine starts to encounter tougher characters – enhanced humans, then robots (Void Droids) and an array of super villain 'bosses' which include arch-enemies Sabretooth, Magneto and Juggernaut."

X-HILARATION

"One of the elements we're most proud of in *Wolverine's Revenge* is the combat," enthuses Houston. "We found that a lot of 3D adventures often have a simplistic fighting system. It's just bash-bash-bash, using the same button or a combination of several buttons. When you get a character like Wolverine who is extremely agile and can do all sorts of moves, you want to add special attacks to the basic punch and kick arsenal." The key was to devise a control system that offered variety without becoming too complex and unwieldy. In *Wolverine's Revenge* the developer has implemented the use of a single action button to pull off a range of special pre-choreographed moves. "These moves are only available at certain times," continues Houston. "When a directional indicator appears

Wolverine has access to a range of special moves – choreographed combat sequences that can be executed quickly and easily.

on the floor and the word 'Strike' flashes up on the screen, then something special is available. These big combat sequences are based on the context of those around you. There are moves for dealing with two or three people and for enemies attacking from different angles. So Wolverine might pull off a flying head-butt, a spinning drop-kick, or a savage multiple stabbing. It depends on the situation."

X-TREME

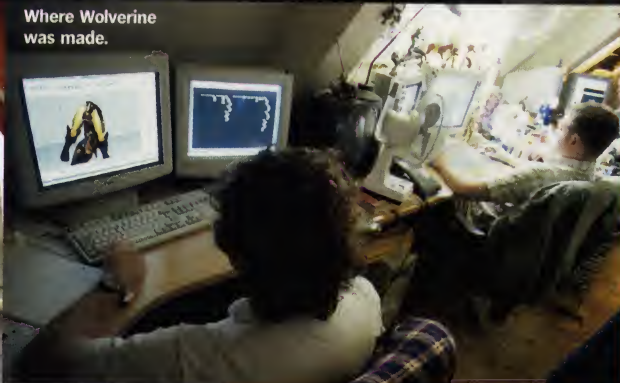
"Wolverine is a tough character, with the ability to fight with or without his deadly claws extended. So we had to deal with the fact that he should be able to decimate his human opponents. It became clear that we needed to put a lot of them in. Obviously these guys realise they won't get far attacking Wolverine on their own, so the AI will make them gang up or attack with bigger weapons – flamethrowers or rocket launchers for example." Wolverine can also pick up his human opponents, use them as weapons, or even cruelly throw them onto a minefield to detonate the explosives. "We've also designed points where Wolverine can remotely control robots or man gun emplacements, adding a projectile element to the gameplay which the character wouldn't normally have."

X-PERIENCED

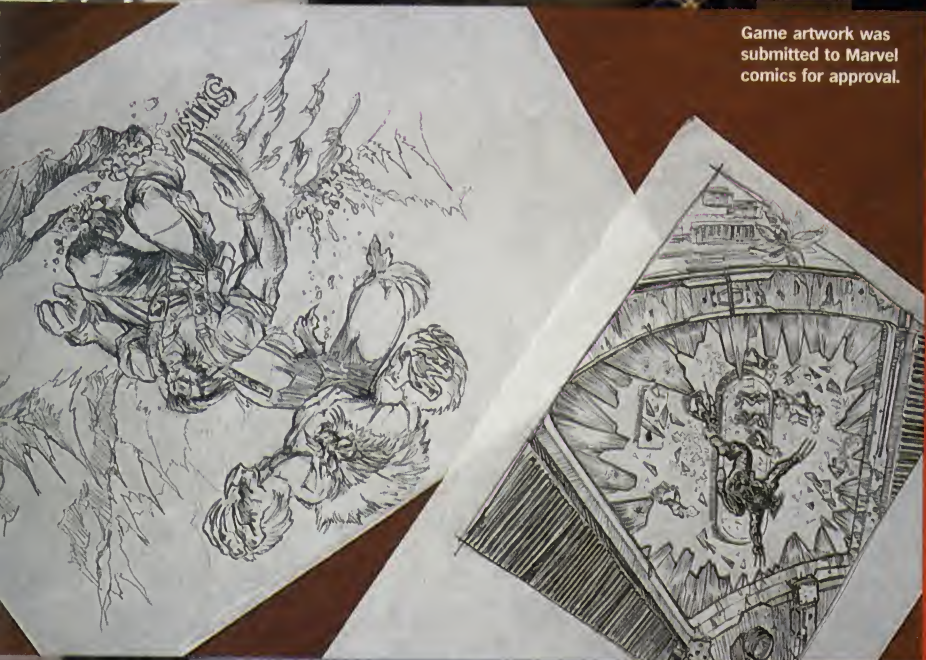
In addition to his fighting skills, Wolverine has heightened senses. At different points during the game the player can take advantage of these senses in a variety of ways. Using his enhanced vision, for example, Wolverine can make out footprints on the ground, highlight buried mines, even see the heat glow around a hidden enemy. Wolverine also has the power to sense the location of objects that are needed to solve puzzles. □



"Ooh, put those claws away!"



Where Wolverine was made.



Game artwork was submitted to Marvel comics for approval.



Boss battles test those super-skills.



The game boasts eight vast levels, set indoors and out.

WHO IS WOLVERINE?

Not only is he a mutant, but he's a mutant with a hidden past...

Comic book lore marks the first appearance of Wolverine in *Incredible Hulk* #180. Known as Logan, his mutant abilities include enhanced eyesight and smell plus extraordinary hearing. He is also blessed (or cursed, depending on your point of view) with two sets of three bone/blade claws which can shoot out from his knuckles. Logan's body also demonstrates incredible healing abilities – an advanced rate of cell regeneration and resistance to disease and poisons.

This healing ability is the main reason why he was taken against his will for the Weapon X program. In a secret lab in the Canadian wilderness, scientists laced Logan's bones with the metal adamantium, making them virtually unbreakable. Having replaced his memories, Logan was trained as an assassin (codename: Wolverine) before joining the X-Men. The hero with the lambchop sides currently bunks at the Xavier Institute for Higher Learning, home to the Children of the Atom.





Q&A

THE COMIC ART

The code we watched of *Wolverine's Revenge* was still pretty early, but we witnessed smooth animation, glorious texture detail and breathless brawling. *OPS2* asked Art Director Tarlochan Randhawa how he brought Wolverine to life.

How true to the comic book hero is the digital Wolverine?
All the elements that fans know are there – the healing, the ability to cut through solid objects, the heightened senses. Obviously, everything we've done has had to be approved by Marvel. While we started out with Wolverine in one of his older comic costumes [the blue and yellow one] through development, we moved towards a look that's closer to the movie and what you see in the current comics. We'll probably end up changing Sabretooth's costume in the same way, so he'll be a down and dirty biker rather than a big guy in a spandex leotard.

Has the design developed as the project has progressed?
Absolutely. Different comic artists add their own stylistic elements to a superhero character, retaining the overall look but adjusting some of the smaller details. We've also been able to do this. Marvel was happy with our initial character sketches and encouraged new characters to be introduced.

Our vision of the design has always been shadowy and dark, although there was a slight *Street Fighter* influence to our original character design. From there we moved closer to the look of the current comic books, sticking closely to the current comic book guidelines. Generally, modern-day Wolverine looks like an X-badged biker. Working with such an established character, there are certain boundaries – those set by Marvel and those based on fan expectation. But working within these boundaries you can achieve a great deal. We've been able to have a free rein on designing the low-level soldiers and the more powerful Ghosthunters. To create the detailed textures, we scanned our original character sketches into the computer and built the layers of detail and colour on top of them.

Guards are easy to kill. It's the giant robots you need to watch out for.



“Our next job is to develop a controller rumble for Wolverine's senses, so you can ‘feel’ danger before you see it”

☐ With these abilities in mind, some levels are darker and slow down the action to the tense pace of a survival horror.

Unfortunately, Wolverine can't use his mutated senses while fighting. Some levels are better played using stealth where you sneak past guards and bypass security systems rather than fighting. “Our next job is to develop a controller rumble for Wolverine's senses, so you can ‘feel’ danger before you can see it,” says Houston.

X-PANSION

Wolverine's Revenge also has a cerebral side. “On the game's prison level, Wolverine can use a guard's uniform to move around undetected, unless you do something aggressive like pop his claws out. On another level, Wolverine can stand in a freezer compartment to lower his body temperature, enabling him to sneak past a thermal security scanner. There are little puzzles like this throughout the game.” And to point Wolverine in the right direction, Professor Xavier (voiced by Patrick Stewart) offers advice as you progress. “There's nothing worse in a third-person adventure than running around wondering where to go or what to do. We've tried to avoid that as much as possible.”

X-PERIMENTATION

It's hard not to spot some influences from *Spider-Man*, particularly because it's also a superhero game. Houston and his team also acknowledge this: “The original *Spider-Man* game on the PSone was the first one that didn't compromise the character. Usually the problem with superhero games is that people find all sorts of devices to impose gameplay strictures, for example, ‘Superman's lost his powers, pick up the coins to earn the right to fly again...’ Staying true to the comic book character, his powers and limitations, is something that *Spider-Man* did very well. In contrast, *Batman* never seems to appear in a good game, although *Batman: Vengeance* was a reasonable attempt. That was a game we looked at quite a lot. I'm quite a fan of the animated series on which

it was based and we used it as inspiration for some of our cut-scenes. But *Vengeance* over-complicated everything. The developer tried to incorporate all of Batman's abilities, so it was very stop/start in nature. We've had to be very aware of this pitfall.”

X-PECTION

Wolverine's Revenge is currently at an early development stage and isn't due for release until 2003. There's a long way to go, but the game is already changing from the team's original vision. “Certain elements have evolved and become a much bigger part of the game than we first thought,” explains Houston. “The big moves, for example. We originally thought that we might go for a more traditional *Tekken*-style combat system with the special moves hidden away in combos. But when you have so many buttons that are required for other Wolverine controls such as activating the senses and whipping out the claws, a combo system wasn't really suitable. We felt that complex controls don't let you do what you want to do most. That is, to pull off the spectacular superhero moves Wolverine is known for.” Because you'll want to be able to do everything straight away, *Wolverine's Revenge* lets you do everything straight away. You don't need to discover buried actions or learn them along the way. “Every time you pull off a special Wolverine move,” continues Houston, “you earn points. You'll eventually be able to exchange these for rewards on the front-end, such as additional costumes, galleries or production art. That blue and yellow costume might also be there...”

Conveying the sheer scale and ferocity of the character's abilities was always going to be a big challenge, but *Wolverine's Revenge* already has a variety to its gameplay that hasn't really been seen before in this type of game. On top of the core adventuring, the game features puzzle-solving and action with an emphasis on spectacular superhero combat. Boss battles add different combat elements again, pitting Wolverine against arch-enemies such as Juggernaut, Sabretooth and Wendigo.

“We've designed a dynamic camera system to keep all of the combatants in view, and a dynamic musical score to heighten the sense of tension as you play. Even now the results are great fun to watch – our artists and animators are doing a stunning job!” Houston is certainly confident in his creation, and if our first look is anything to go by, there'll be claws for celebration when it lands on PS2s around the world. ☐



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TEXT :: RICHIE YOUNG :: PHOTOS :: RICHIE YOUNG

YOU AIN'T SEEN NOTHIN' YET

It's not a sequel. It's not a prequel. It's the next instalment of *Grand Theft Auto*.



This scene is based on a real club at South Beach, Florida.

Publisher: Rockstar
Developer: Rockstar North
Distributor: Take 2 Interactive
Out: October 27
Players: 1
Genre: Sex, drugs 'n' disco



There are big games and then there are big games. On top of that are games like *Grand Theft Auto*. In true style but simultaneously breaking all moulds made before it; *Grand*

Theft Auto: Vice City is poised to become a landmark experience. In an already saturated world of mass entertainment, that's no easy feat.

Rockstar are the young company behind the *GTA* franchise. *OPS2* recently met the team in Miami (which *Vice City* is based on), including half of the company's four founders - Dan Houser and Terry Donovan.

If the company's attitude and achievements were to be captured in a teen movie; of all the characters they'd be the youngest and brashest. They'd breeze into town and up the hallways with a "fuck you" attitude, and consequently conquer all before them with little concern of anything but

Rockstar do what they want. And their games are living proof.

It's no secret that Rockstar's landmark games, (most notably *Grand Theft Auto III*) have generated both critical and commercial reward. When *GTA III* was unleashed on the (somewhat unknowing) Australian public last year, three things happened.

First, gamers automatically had to re-adjust how they judged games. *GTA III* successfully redefined freedom in a virtual space and 'scripted' adventure games looked decidedly archaic when compared to this new, non-linear environment.

The 'games' industry moving closer to being recognised as a legitimate form of entertainment was the second. *GTA III*'s experience had gamers in a cinematic, edgy, fun and fulfilling world while

still maintaining its identity as a 'true' game. As talk rages on surrounding the games and movie industries "merging closer together" *GTA III* can be credited as one of the pioneering games to take a giant leap.

Australia's gaming public unwillingly became the centreplece of worldwide discussion as the original batch of *GTA III* copies were pulled from shelves and banned due to their content. To this date, no 18+ rating is in place for videogames here, meaning that games like *GTA* cannot be released unless some very slight alterations are made. Rockstar make no bones about it though. They are in the business of making games that they would personally enjoy playing. Obviously, their games (including *State of Emergency*, *Max Payne*, *Smuggler's Run* and the upcoming *Midnight Club 2*) are skewed for adults. Only. These are not kid's games in the vein of *Rayman* or *Crash*, and they claim they've never targeted the younger audience into buying their games.

Having said that, the version scheduled for Australia will only have very slight amendments made and industry movements are still in place to lobby the Government and the Classification Board (Office of Film and Literature Classification) for Australia to have an 18+ rating. This is an

ongoing issue for game publishers nationwide, who also urge gamers to have their voices heard through these same channels.

Moving the industry forward is as important to Rockstar as is pushing the boundaries of videogames and they don't think the former can happen without the latter. "The only way to move the industry forward is with the games. Not just a little, a huge fucking lot," says Terry Donovan.

Perhaps Terry himself, put *GTA III* into the best perspective when he compares it relative to the music industry. "The '60's were wild. No one knew what they were doing. The '70's were like, 'OK, maybe we should have like, record companies. The '80's moved to MTV. All the record companies and their systems that they had in place maxed out. Everybody went global. It was the time when real mega stars were formed. Now, the music industry tries to re-live that glory. They had a business model that was invented in, I don't know, 1974. We take X, we give the artist that, we give the songwriter that; we pay a little money to the bloke in radio, pay a little money to the bloke on TV and everything should work. Now it doesn't. What we lost sight of was the *lunacy*, the creativeness."

The Biz'

Rockstar is a relatively young company, and was founded as recently as 1998. The four English founders Terry Donovan, Jamie King, and brothers Sam and Dan Houser are now based in New York and the company now employs staff right around the globe. The company's philosophy is very enviable, and despite their worldwide success there is no pretension or ego apparent. "There is not one person who is going to sit there and be all mighty," says Producer Jeronimo Barrera. The *GTA* developers are now known as Rockstar North, but were formerly known as DMA Design. Based in Scotland, Rockstar North provides the lion's share of the technical know-how when implementing the game design into the *GTA* games.



Miami

for your eyes only



Lucky for you, the *Grand Theft Auto* series is set to remain as staple diets of PlayStation 2 gamers everywhere. In an exclusive deal struck up earlier this year, Rockstar has agreed to develop *Vice City* and all future instalments of the series for the PS2 only. This deal is concrete until 2004, meaning that you're in the right corner! Wicked, yeh?!



terry
Donovan
on GTAVIII

"It's people's personal experiences with the game that make it special."





Vice City will be home to far more cars and environments.



Miami

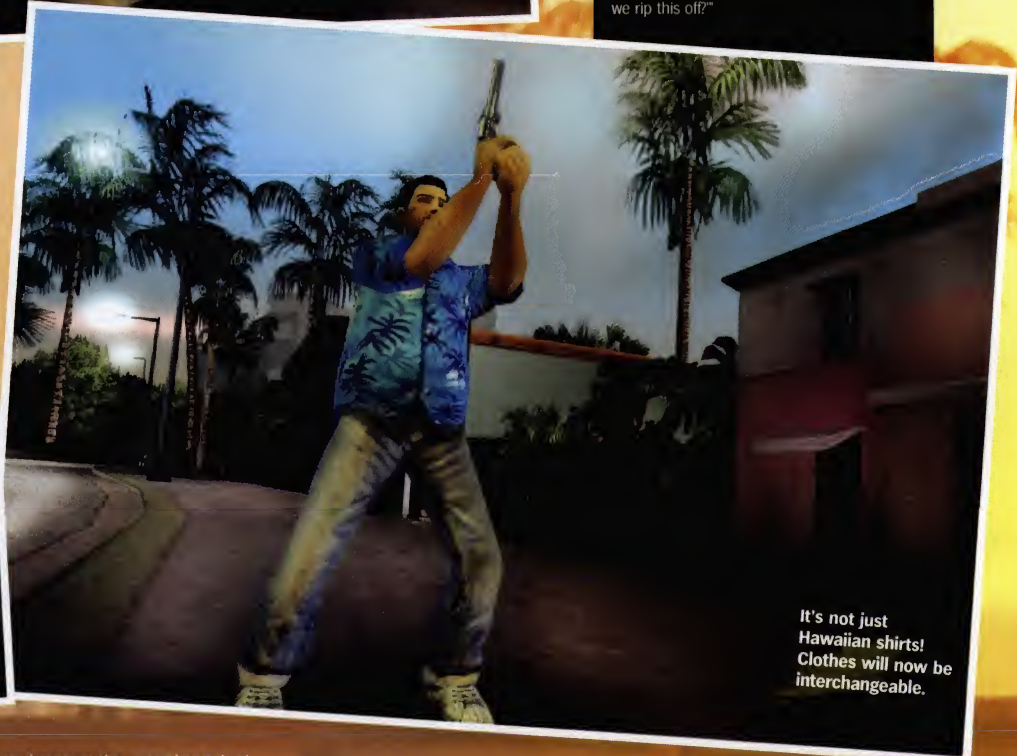
Dan Houser on the Rockstar team

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"We are lucky to have a good team. To get the game like from a technical standpoint and gameplay standpoint where we want it and feel like it has personality, comes from the fact that we have fun. Guys who are programmers and art directors are talking to executive producers, one on one. That's where the quality of the team we've got is. Some companies look at it and go, 'Ooh, how can we rip this off?'"



Rockstar has done a great job in recreating the '80's. Go purple neon!



It's not just Hawaiian shirts! Clothes will now be interchangeable.

"The fact is that the good part of the music industry was when noone knew what they were doing. To be frank, I don't really think anyone in the games industry knows what they're doing. We certainly don't. It's not very old. There's no rules. There's no deals. There's no clutter of management's lawyer's agents. You don't have to call 17 people to speak to somebody else. This industry is kinda where the music industry was in the early '60's: lots of people with lots of good ideas and a chance to do something really interesting."

"Now, *Grand Theft Auto III* has grossed more than *The Gladiator* and *The Matrix*. When you think about it, it's a bit of a mind twister. You're like, 'I thought they got an Oscar for that.' It doesn't add up anymore. We got to this place very quietly and very humbly as a group, as an industry and suddenly we're slightly better than everybody else. But we still don't know what we're doing."

Yep, that's how important *GTA III* is. As we roll toward the future, it's going to be up there with the *Pongs*, *Pac-Mans*, *Tekkens*, *GTs*, *Metal Gears* and *Marios*. At such a crucial point of the 'next generation' of gaming, it may

even become the *most* important.

WHAT ABOUT VICE CITY?

And now it's time for the next installment! Secrecy has shrouded *GTA: Vice City* since the first details of its very existence were leaked. Until now.

"We've taken so many risks and now, I think we're in a place to just drop our underwear and show you what we've really got," says Terry Donovan.

Noone has published or had access to the screenshots you can see sprawled on these very pages. It was the most notable absentee at this year's E3 and to say that details have been scarce is a gross understatement.

To put it bluntly, *GTA: VC* is a true sequel that is set to astound even the most critical gamer, as well as the increasing field of opposition that it faces (like Activision's *True Crime*). The entire game has been completely 'overhauled' for this version. What's even more amazing is that the sheer size and freedom of *Vice City* is set to even dwarf what was seen in *GTA III*. Any fan of that game will

find the mere thought of that almost unfathomable!

There are many changes that are immediately noticeable (like the increased variety and the skin-modelled characters, flowing clothes and streaming textures), although it will only be over extended play and exploration of *Vice City* that the true depth and detail will emerge. Both Terry and Dan are keen to express the desire of what they wanted to achieve with *Vice City*. Most prominent of which, was ensuring that they don't release a sub-par quality game to eager gamers and set them up for disappointment.

"We don't think that we're good yet but we're not here to hand you more of the same. It's not in our blood. It wouldn't be fair on you. It wouldn't be fair on ourselves," says Terry.

TIME FOR THE NITTY GRITTY

As we inch closer toward the game's release, more details are set to emerge. Even after *OPS2* saw the game first-

GTA: VICE CITY



Just one cop car is how the Blues Brothers started...

Dan Houser with GTA Producers Jeronimo Barrera (left) and Jeremy Pope (right).

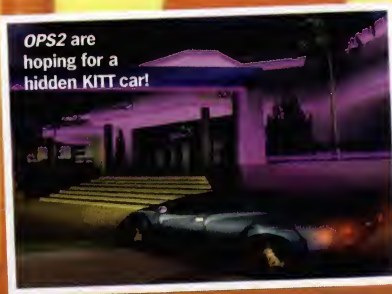


Miami

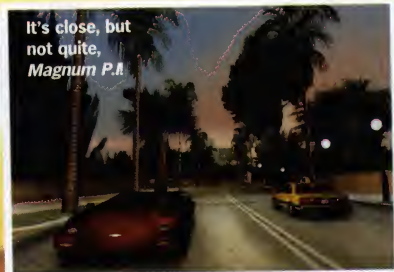
Dan Houser on GTAIII getting banned in Australia

GameSpot: GTAIII has a more subtle story than Grand Theft Auto. The story is told through a series of cutscenes and a series of missions. The story is a love story and a war story.

"It's a funny anomaly there, because Australia isn't a particularly censorious country at all but that's why there is no 18-plus!" says Dan. "Without the 18-plus rating - I mean, I was watching violent films at five. My brother would sit with my mate and I and watch it. It never made me want to commit those things. "It was never in the game design. That is just the problem of having a freeform world and giving people lots of things to do. The two least visual aspects of the game - the hookers and the collecting money off the people that you mugged or killed - are both really cartoony. And because they had to be quick, are possibly the least cool aspects of the whole game. At that point it becomes very much a videogame. So to have that as something you're banning it for is so silly. The problem with any movie or any videogame you want to make into a core thing is that you can take these things out of context and they sound horrific. When you look at them you're like, 'How can anyone actually think this going to undermine society in any way?'. But that's a separate deal for everyone to get their heads 'round. We get kinda bored; in fact very bored, of being the bad boys of the videogames business and fighting these fights. We're just making games that we're into."



OPS2 are hoping for a hidden KITT car!



It's close, but not quite, Magnum P.I.

hand and was privy to 'inside' information, we were still assured that even more secrets and details will come to light. Gamers everywhere have been scouring anything that they can get their mitts on for *Vice City* information. Without further ado, here is a list and rundown on the things that you can certainly expect from *Vice City*. Don't worry, you're not the only one whose mind is racing, heart's pumping and mouth's watering.

VICE CITY

WILL BE equal parts *Miami Vice* and *Scarface*. Massive. **WILL BE ABOUT** corruption, glamour, power, drugs, sleaze, crime and decadence.

HAS all the (anti)-stylisation and cultural references from the '80's. Rockstar intend that the plethora of subtle points of this virtual environment will bring the world alive.

IS BASED in Miami. At the same time, Miami is home to the most beautiful and the scariest people in the world. Geographically, it is a cesspit of crime, glamour and drugs. Vice City is closer to Miami than Liberty City [of *GTA III*] is to New York. Maps and layout of Vice City and Miami are

almost identical.

IS only the beginning!

THINK BIG, MISTER.

When *OPS2* flew to Miami to meet with Rockstar, they [and Rockstar North] were still working hard on the game and experimenting with adding even more objects and vehicles than the numbers listed here. The following should be used as a guide only, but we'd expect more, not less!

SIZE Vice City is estimated to be 2 to 2.5 times the size of Liberty City with a far greater use of height. There are also a lot more indoor areas including nightclubs and strip clubs that open up new aspects of the *Grand Theft Auto* world. No kidding.

VEHICLES *GTA III* had 40 vehicles. In Vice City there are now over 100. And it's just not cars, either! There are rumours about some of the more novel cars [yes, there is a driveable golf buggy!], but *OPS2* can also confirm the existence of a Harley Davidson-type bike with excellent handling and physics and cars will feature multiple passengers. There will also be far more use of the water, so



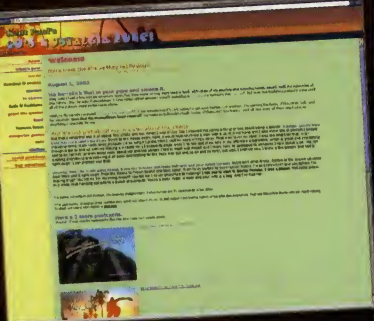
A great place to drink... but you will want some company!

GTA: VICE CITY

Miami

Webbed wonders

Rockstar may be staying tight-lipped over exact plans for its forthcoming *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City* game, but that hasn't stopped the New York-based company producing a couple of interesting Web teasers. The construction of two sites, kentpaul.com and concretetv.com, both accessible through Rockstar's newly designed home page, has once again fuelled a barrage of speculation and rumour. Here's OPS2's definitive rundown of the two sites and what they contain.



kentpaul.com

Cunningly disguised as a fan site with naff Flash animation and crude design, kentpaul.com purports to have been constructed by Paul from Kent, whose major passion is 'everything Eighties'. In fact, the Web site is registered to Rockstar's New York office and contains enough references to suggest that the company's beatnik President Sam Houser is the more likely author. The big hit for fans is the malleable Miami e-postcard which appears to contain an in-game image of *Vice City*. Among the site's clickable sections lie obvious pointers to the game's content: 'Famous Faces' could have been called 'Game Characters', while 'Social Problems' has a list of crimes with *GTA: Vice City* written all over them. In other categories, Rockstar has been more coy – cars, music, timeline and events, clothes and movies are all empty, but for text explaining they'll be updated at a later date. Whether Rockstar plans to do this once proper screens and info have entered the mainstream seems unlikely, but still, top marks for the clever PR stunt.



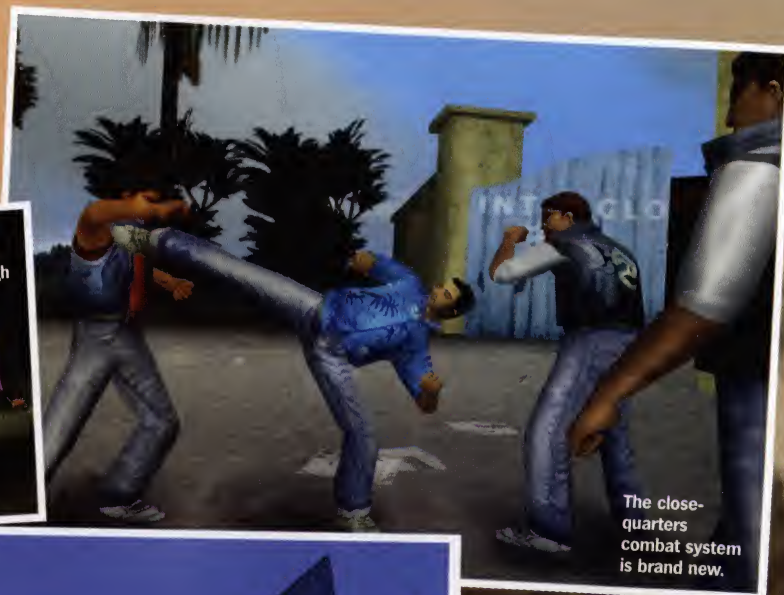
concretetv.com

Equally interesting is Rockstar's hiring of US video-editing guerrilla Ron Rocheleau to help its campaign. The real-life artist creates video montages made up of obscure films and music for a late-night slot on Manhattan's public access channel, MNN, and the two pieces of his work that are featured on concretetv.com are clearly a homage to the themes of *Vice City*.

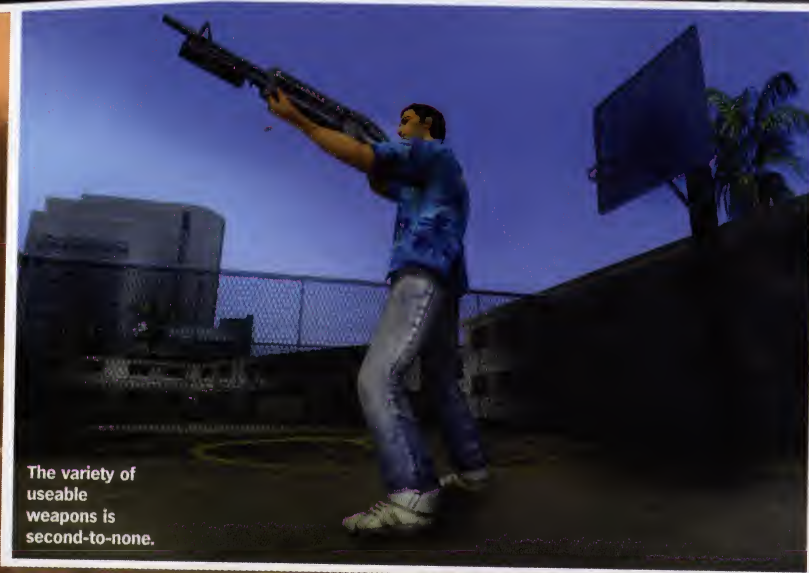
In amongst footage of B-movie monsters, car chases, workout routines, kung-fu masters and sequences from blurred-out grumble flicks, there are some obvious references to the game's Eighties vibe through clips of *Flashdance* and *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*. Meanwhile, we also catch glimpses of rap outfit The Fat Boys, disco dancers, strippers and car crash sequences. According to Rocheleau, this project took him just a week to complete.



Affluent 'Fat Cat' types will abound through the plot.



The close-quarters combat system is brand new.



The variety of useable weapons is second-to-none.

☒ you can expect plenty of boats as well. Wanna fly a helicopter? Then head to *Vice City*. Cool? Yes?

FREEDOM Many new animations and abilities are now possible with an overhauled game engine. The hand-to-hand combat and targeting systems are brand new. The other significant innovation, is the ability to shoot out car tyres. This opens up a whole new world of gameplay elements and will realistically affect the car's handling when you're at the wheel.

MISSIONS There are now twice as many missions than seen in *GTA III* and many of them are now far more comprehensive and consist of multiple parts. Think 'Bomb the Base' from *GTA III*.

ARTILLERY This area has yet another overhaul. *GTA III* included 15 weapons. *Vice City* will feature at least 40, one of which will be a knife. Not quite like Croc Dundee's, but cool nonetheless...

ANIMATIONS *GTA III* = 150 animations. *Vice City* = over 400. 'Nuff said.

FMV CUT SCENES *GTA III* = 30 minutes of cut scenes. *Vice City* = 1 hour and 20 minutes.

HUMOUR The humour in *GTA III* was one of the main things that gamers found the most endearing. The scripts (written by James Wall and Dan Houser) have subsequently had similar treatment. You liked *GTA III*'s humour? Just like everything else, *Vice City* is set to take the cake as they up the ante! Children of the '80's will be particularly impressed.

ENVIRONMENTS *Vice City*'s world is far more varied. Expect to explore everything from slums, mansions, swamps, the beach, luxury islands, Hispanic ghettos, the sea and the city. Between 50 and 60 interactive indoor locations will be included.

THE CAST *Vice City*'s cast of voice actors can be aligned far more closely with that of a feature film. Rockstar were only prepared to reveal the name of one actor at the time of going to press, Ray Liotta (*John Q. Narc*, *Blow*, *Goodfellas*) will play the lead

character of Tommy Vercetti. They have also claimed 'it [will have] a bigger cast than any movie that will be released this year.' Having said that though, Rockstar's sole interest is making the world's most intriguing games and storytelling, not in the business of making movies. Thus, the actor's names won't be used to market *Vice City* and that

they have been included solely for the purpose of improving the story and experience. This is something that they should be applauded for.

MUSIC You like Love Media 'making sure all American radio sounds the same'? *GTA III* had a staggering three hours of radio and music included. Now, *Vice City* is set to include between nine and ten hours of radio. Further to that, Rockstar say that, 'it'll be the greatest soundtrack in any game or movie ever.' A big claim, but again they were unable to elaborate. Little is yet known about further plans, but we were assured that all will be revealed 'in time' and that it will be 'huge'.

Among many others, the track listing will include Kool and the Gang, Flock of Seagulls, Laura Branigan, Judas Priest, Hall and Oates, Blondie, Grandmaster Flash and Michael Jackson's 'Startin' Somethin'. This may not sound like a lot to many readers, but this is destined to be a collection of the most definitive artists from that era. This is no *Wedding Singer* soundtrack. By all accounts, this collection alone will be able to have bragging rights.

WEATHER 'We're trying to make a hot, bright game with some bad weather. So the rains and the storms definitely come but they are less a feature than they are in *III*. It has to feel like Miami but the weather does come on,' says Dan Houser.

UP FOR IT

When *GTA: Vice City* is unleashed, it will mark a new point in the way gamers look at games. Like a true classic, it will also be seen as a landmark title – astounding, given the innovation already seen in *GTA III*. If there ever was a game to look forward to, this is it.

* Be sure to read the next issue of OPS2 for the country's first review. We'll also let you in on more of the *Vice City* plot and the Rockstar team! au.playstation.com will also carry *GTA: VC* news.



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TEXT: PAUL FITZPATRICK

TOTAL RECON

New intelligence from a deep cover plant at videogame publisher Ubi Soft confirms techno thriller author Tom Clancy is involved in the development of a series of realistic military simulators based on US Special Forces which are targeting the PlayStation 2 console. Shortly before we lost contact with our mole, we received the following intel. The situation demands your immediate attention. Read and advise.



Tech thriller author Tom Clancy keeps an eye out for the fashion police.



The subject acquired is one Thomas L. Clancy, acclaimed author, born 12 April 1947 in Baltimore, Maryland. For the first 37 years of his life, he led a pretty unremarkable career and details of his activities are scant. It is known that he

majoried in English at Baltimore's Loyola College and worked as an insurance broker for several years.

Among his hobbies, however, the subject developed a passion for military hardware and naval history. His first published work was an article on the MX Intercontinental Ballistic Missile project (later designated LGM-118A Peacekeeper). But it was in 1984 that the subject broke cover with his first novel, *The Hunt For Red October*. It was a great success, simultaneously tapping into public anxieties at the Cold War political climate and introducing the world to Clancy's dominant protagonist, CIA analyst Jack Ryan. The then President Ronald Reagan himself concluded with characteristic elegance that *THRO* was "non-put-downable." With his

first novel, the subject had seized the attention of the most powerful man in the Western world.

While conducting research for *Red Storm Rising* in 1985, the subject made contact with one Doug Littlejohns, a Royal Navy Captain. Littlejohns passed technical advice to our subject, but then contact ceased. 12 years later, Clancy re-established their relationship. He was keen to establish a 'multimedia entertainment' company and considered Littlejohns ideal to lead the venture. In 1997, with Littlejohns installed as CEO, Red Storm Entertainment launched *Politika*, an ambitious title sold as a board game and/or an online PC game bundled with a companion novel. The *Risk*-style, playable incarnations of *Politika* were not hugely successful.

Since the global politics depicted so authentically in Clancy's novels had failed to connect with the wider gamesplaying public, his encyclopaedic knowledge of military hardware and tactics suggested a much more 'hands-on' route to gamers' hearts. Tom Clancy's *Rainbow Six* (1998) proved this assumption to be correct.

This first-person, squad-based, tactical shooter set a new benchmark for technical reality, with weapons and tactics accurately modelled on those used in the field. A sequel, *Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear*, developed this successful formula. Red

Storm Entertainment became a wholly owned subsidiary of Ubi Soft in September 2000 and the following year *Ghost Recon* was released. This time US special forces were the protagonists and predominantly close-quarters combat was swapped for more expansive, military operations.

Here's where your involvement begins. A mole at Ubi Soft has informed us that the company is planning to smuggle at least two games inspired by the Tom Clancy universe onto PS2. The first is *Ghost Recon*. The second is a brand-new title going under the name *The Sum Of All Fears*. The remainder of this dossier collates all the information we currently have on these two projects and a further two games that have the potential to decimate PS2 gamers' free time.

Beware, dissemination of this information is a violation of the Official Secrets Act.





TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON BACKGROUND INTEL

Operation Type: Squad-Based Tactical Shooter
Operational ETA: October

Mission Breakdown: Fifteen Ghost Recon Missions, Eight Desert Siege Missions, Five Tactical Exercises

Multiple Operative Modes: i-Link and Split-Screen. Two Co-operative Play Modes. Three Adversarial Modes.

CAMPAIGN BACKGROUND

The year is 2008. After years of faltering democracy in their country, ultra nationalists in Russia have seized power and initiated a plan to rebuild the former might of the Soviet Union. One by one, former Independent states are toppling to the Russian forces. We in the West must stop this advance or face the consequences.

Operation Ghost Recon aims to prepare the ground for the NATO allies' main offensive against the nationalist forces. To this end you will lead a select group of six Green Berets from the 1st Battalion, D Company on a series of dangerous missions. These specialists are known as the 'Ghosts' thanks to their ability to infiltrate enemy territory, conduct covert military strikes and exfiltrate without detection.

DEPLOYMENT

Although played as an FPS, *Ghost Recon's* gameplay is a million miles away from titles like *Half-Life* and even *Medal of Honor: Frontline*. This is hardcore military gaming where a single shot can kill, and the lives of five other soldiers are in your hands. But if you're new to the Clancy school of hardass combat, don't fret. Ubi Soft has included a comprehensive 'virtual basic training' to help you fine tune your skills.

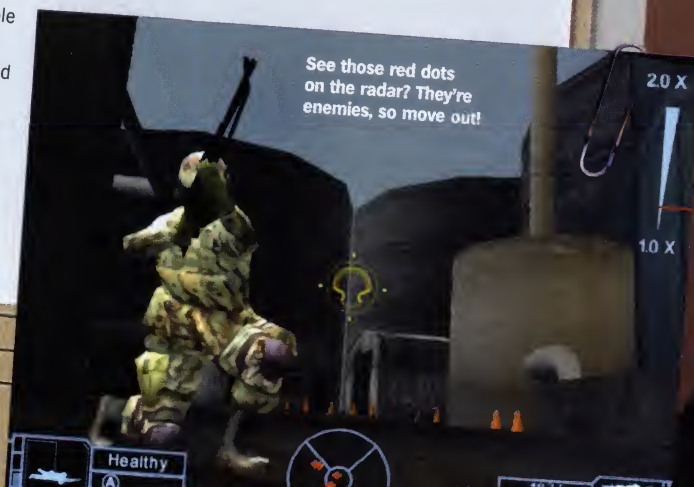
As a further concession to action-obsessed console gamers, the dense planning found in the *Rainbow Six* games on PC has been rejected in favour of condensed mission briefings that explain objectives (four per mission) with a minimum of fuss. From here you hand pick two three-man teams from an unlockable pool of 12 specialists. These include snipers, demolition and heavy weapons experts. There's an incentive to choose a good all-round squad, since points are awarded at

the end of each mission that can be 'spent' to enhance your comrades' attributes.

ON THE BATTLEFIELD

Controlling your teams couldn't be easier. You can switch between each of the six specialists whenever you want. Say you play as 'Andy Grunt' in Alpha Team. The other two members will follow, unless ordered to do otherwise, courtesy of some Impressive AI. Ordering your comrades involves setting waypoints on the mission map: simply select the target area and then opt for Hold, Advance or At All Costs to choose their combat stance on arrival.

Expansive environments and the two-team dynamic allow for incredible freedom when it comes to choosing how you achieve your objectives – an advantage, when these can be anything from house to house clearance of an enemy held village to protecting UN peacekeepers from Soviet artillery. Factor in the option to play any stage as a high casualty firefight, or as a stealthy, one-man reconnaissance mission, and *Ghost Recon* aims to be as tool-up as the real-life soldiers who inspired it.



Oliver Chappe has access to both Ghost Recon and SoAF.

TRANSCRIPT #253/ABB. INTERVIEW OF OLIVER CHAPPE, CONTENT MANAGER ON GHOST RECON

So what are you doing to make the PS2 version of Ghost Recon more than just a direct PC port?

Ghost Recon PS2 is aimed to wow PS2 gamers as the PC version did for PC gamers. So the PS2 version will finally be better. Better graphics: our artists did a great job of optimization and the results are the game looking great with the same huge maps and more and better special effects. Better AI: we had time to focus on the gameplay, and tune it to improve the single-player experience. Better sound: with a lot of work on environmental audio, to create an Immersive atmosphere, including Dolby Pro Logic II standard. And more gameplay: we are including two games in one. Both *Ghost Recon* and the additional missions found in *Ghost Recon: Desert Siege* will be available for the player.

Come on now, is there anything else?

Players will also find some 'Tactical Exercises'. These are short and quick missions, focusing on one important part of the gameplay. They are designed especially to attract console players and familiarize them with squad-based gameplay.

Will the game have multiplayer maps/modes?

We are adding split-screen possibilities for *Ghost Recon* for PS2. All mission maps should be available to play in co-operative mode. We are still working on which adversarial modes to include, but there will definitely be some!

Which element of the PS2 *Ghost Recon* are you most proud of from a technological viewpoint?

Technically, the most challenging part was to optimise the huge maps of the PC version to have them running on PS2 without losing content. The team worked hard and the result is great. We have them all running with room for improvements!

Describe the kind of emotions you want gamers to feel playing *Ghost Recon*?

Everything you could feel on a battlefield. The most important are fear and tension. The player must feel the danger that comes with real-life combat situations.



And you thought the FBI all wore boring black suits...

TRANSCRIPT #254/ABB. INTERROGATION OF OLIVER CHAPPE, CONTENT MANAGER ON UBI SOFT'S THE SUM OF ALL FEARS

Tell us the truth, Mr Chappe. Why is *SoAF* the best game based on a Tom Clancy novel ever made?

First, *SoAF* is using the latest technology in terms of the game engine. The team did a lot of optimisation, so that we could not only use the huge environments of the PC version, but also improve them. This allowed us to play the game on PS2 early in the production process, and to focus on the gameplay to make it compelling on PS2. The action follows the great story line of Clancy's novel, and explores the side action that parallels Jack Ryan's adventures in Paramount's film. It is not only based on the movie, it really completes the movie.

Describe a typical mission in *SoAF*.

Infiltrate the designated area, eliminate the enemies, find and achieve objectives, and save yourself.

Very succinct. Well, try this then. Which five adjectives best describe *SoAF*?

Realistic, action-packed, immersive, tense, breathtaking.

In *SoAF* you lead one of the FBI's Hostage Rescue Teams. How will your approach to missions differ from other squad-based titles?

First, a player is given an in-depth briefing. This relays basic information about the story as well as the all-important objectives. Then, the player gets to choose from mission-based equipment sets. FBI/CIA HQ has already picked out the best weapon set for the mission, but players can choose to use another if they like. The player has a plan already chosen for them, which they can follow throughout the mission, although equally they can choose not to follow it if they prefer... Finally, just like in the real FBI/CIA, multiple support teams will provide back-up in missions where more firepower is required.

Imagine the *SoAF* movie poster was advertising your game. What would the tag line be?

Recreate the movie experience at home.

THE SUM OF ALL FEARS

Operation Type: Squad-Based Tactical Shooter

Operational ETA: 27 September

Mission Breakdown: Eleven Missions. Seven stage training school.

Multiple Operative Modes: I-Link and Split-Screen.

Co-operative Play. Adversarial Modes (Specifics TBC).

CAMPAIGN BACKGROUND

Present day. New Year's eve.

Militia members from West Virginia have seized control of a local TV station and are

broadcasting their demands over the air. As members of the FBI's elite Hostage Rescue Team, you and your men have been called in to resolve the situation. However, what seems to be the work of domestic terrorists is soon revealed to be much more when a nuclear device is detonated in Baltimore. Under the expert guidance of special ops maverick John Clark (the hero of Clancy's darker novels) and CIA analyst Jack Ryan, you must hunt down the international terrorists behind the atrocity and bring them to justice.

DEPLOYMENT

Based on the same engine used by *Ghost Recon*, *The Sum of All Fears* is a movie tie-in by name only. While the narrative thread in *SoAF* runs parallel to its big-screen counterpart, the game is all about action, not watching pristine cut-scenes. That said, is *SoAF* going to be *Ghost Recon* with Ben Affleck on the DVD case? The similarities are unavoidable. It's an FPS that requires you to lead a squad on missions. There's a comprehensive training school. And you can play the missions as a sequential campaign, or separately with the option of additional firefight and stealth modes. However, there are important distinctions between

the two titles. Whereas *GR* takes place in large, open environments, *SoAF*'s missions largely take place indoors. If that sounds like a cosmetic difference, it's not. Close-quarters combat requires different weapons and tactics, as the seven training chapters reveal. Fifteen authentic weapons sets are available, with names including open assault and hostage rescue stealth. When you need to clear a small room of targets quickly, the size, weight and fire-rate of your weapon are crucial to your survival.

ON THE BATTLEFIELD

SoAF's gameplay is very much geared to relentless action. A white thread on the on-screen map constantly shows the quickest route to mission objectives. You don't have to follow it, but as a guide through strange environments it's invaluable.

Instead of controlling two separate teams, here you lead and give commands to a pair of operatives only. There is another trio, but it's AI-controlled. In practice, this makes for tense moments as the two teams converge and you have to make a split-second decision: Is the figure bursting into the room with the shotgun one of the good guys or not? What's more, co-ordinating your actions with the other squads adds real impetus to the gameplay. That's if remaining alive isn't motivation enough for you...



Warm, live bodies.
At least until you
arrive, guns blazing.

TARGETS ACQUIRED

Our latest updated intel suggests that as *The Sum of All Fears* and *Ghost Recon* are prepared for deployment on PS2, there are two further Clancy-based titles that are being readied for action...



Thermal imaging is just one gadget in *Splinter Cell*.

Will *Splinter Cell* come to PS2? We'd put money on it.

A: TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX: RAVEN SHIELD

Official sources will not confirm that the third game in the *Rainbow Six* universe is targeting PS2. However, we have received intelligence that this will indeed be the case. True to previous games in the series, *Raven Shield* will demand a more detailed approach to mission planning than other squad-based shooters from the stable of *The Sum of All Fears* and even *Ghost Recon*. Our reconnaissance team intercepted this fragment of a communique from Producer Chaddi Lebbos.

"...We want this game to be the most realistic Elite Police tactical simulator. To achieve this goal, the development team leaders have been trained by the GTI SQ team [elite hostage-rescue team in Montreal, Canada]. Moreover, we are working closely with a member of LAPD Tactics. He's a strong adviser that helps us on the design of gadgets, tactics and tells us how an operative should react to specific situations..."

Our spy operatives continue to monitor all channels for new data on *Raven Shield*.

B: TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL

Agents at the recent E3 show in Los Angeles uncovered an Ubi Soft plot to overthrow *MGS2*'s Solid Snake from his status as pre-eminent stealth technician in the world today. *Splinter Cell*, as the project is currently known, pits a lone field operative from a secret US agency designated as Third Echelon against cyber terrorists intent on destabilising world order.

Marking a departure from other Clancy titles and confirming its tacit challenge to the daddy of sneak-'em-ups, *Splinter Cell* is a third-person stealth/action title featuring a lone protagonist. Early word on the game is nothing short of ecstatic. Snake beware? Although Ubi Soft denies that the PC/Xbox title will infiltrate the PS2 market, *OPS2* analysts conclude that failure to anticipate future deployment of this title on the bestselling next-gen platform in the world would be extremely foolhardy.

In other words, we'd bet serious money on a future release for PS2.

Are these images
of the man out to
destroy Solid Snake?

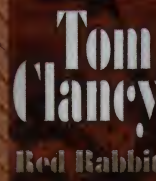


DOCUMENT
#1003/AGTF-7831
PROFILE:
COMPOSER,
BILL BROWN

Audio analysis of the music underscoring the action of *Ghost Recon* and *The Sum of All Fears* identifies it as the work of composer Bill Brown, known by some as the John Williams of videogames. Brown is Director of Music at the Soundelux Design Music Group in Hollywood and has notched up a large body of work on both the big and small screen. In addition to the stirring military themes he's composed for all of Red Storm Entertainment's Tom Clancy games, Brown has contributed to the soundtracks of *Agent Under Fire* and *Return to Castle Wolfenstein*, to name but two titles. In the multiplexes, Brown's work can be heard in films including *Alli*, *Any Given Sunday* and *Finding Forrester*. He's also worked on the sound design of David Lynch's *Lost Highway*. However, be advised, this man has also composed music to promote the campaign of an as yet unidentified military officer by the name of Captain Crunch. Could be Czechoslovakian. Further investigation required.

POTENTIAL HOSTILES

Untapped Clancy novels yet to be mined for PS2 excitement



RED RABBIT

Synopsis

A simple assignment to debrief a Soviet defector soon uncovers a plot to assassinate Pope John Paul II and test the Western world's strength. Jack Ryan is the rookie CIA analyst.

Suggested game

A squad-based FPS based on the exploits of a crack team of the Vatican's Swiss Guard. Armed with ceremonial axes, and garish yellow and blue pantaloons, you and your team must protect the Pope, while saving time to perform long-winded ceremonies and pose for photos with tourists.

RED STORM RISING

Synopsis

When the Soviet Union's largest petrochemical plant is destroyed by terrorists, the Politburo concludes that it must seize the West's protected oil fields in the Middle East to survive. Only to do this, the Soviets must destroy NATO's European forces...

Suggested game

A battlefield sim where you play as the brutal Commies hell bent on bringing the noble and democratic people of the West to their knees. Of course, as a Ruskie officer you'll have access to a wealth of rusty hardware from the Fifties.

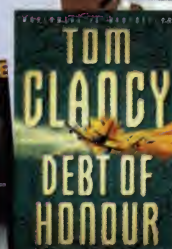
DEBT OF HONOR

Synopsis

A powerful cabal of Japanese industrialists plot to humble the USA by crippling its economy and military.

Suggested game

As Jack Ryan, you must head up a crack team of government negotiators taking the war of words to the land of the rising sun. There your team must negotiate obscure tea ceremonies, incomprehensible (but very clean) public transport and argue your case by speaking ENGLISH... VERY... SLOWLY.





MOOKS CLOTHING CO.



 MO

OKS

Review Charter

FACT: OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE's reviews are the best in the business. Our crack squad of reviewers play the games longer, harder and better than anyone else. And we absolutely love what we do.

It's this dedication that means you can trust our scores above anyone else's. Whether a game's superb or sewage, our experts will tell it like it is with buckets of opinion rather than a few cheap gags and some PR nonsense. Our experienced reviewers have written for the game industry's most revered publications, both here and abroad. What's more, our writers have plenty of 'heritage' in the industry, having a collective history spanning into decades. Rest assured that these are opinions you can trust.

Next time you head off to spend your hard-earned cash on a PlayStation 2 game, make sure you read our reviews first.

REVIEW RATINGS

HERE'S WHAT OUR REVIEW SCORES STAND FOR:

- 10/10** Nigh on revolutionary. A game that could change the face of gaming forever
- 09/10** A truly astonishing game. If you have a PlayStation 2, you need this now
- 08/10** Highly recommended
- 07/10** Good, solid fare that's definitely well worth a look
- 06/10** Better than average, and ideal for hardcore fans of the genre
- 05/10** An average game
- 04/10** Poor, but still with the odd moment
- 03/10** Extremely disappointing
- 02/10** To be avoided
- 01/10** Beer mat

THE OPS2 AWARDS

We don't hand out high scores for nothing so when you see one of these, you'll know it's a sign of quality. Look for them on game boxes.



The Gold Award is a rare gem and only to be given to PS2 games that score that magic 10/10. The only game to get Gold is MGS2. Too right!

The Silver Award is for games that receive 9/10. If you see this, it's a sign of star quality, indicating that you should buy this game now!

The Bronze Award is for games that score 8/10. These games are highly recommended and are 100% guaranteed to satisfy.

media
DVD / MUSIC / MEDIA

DVD RELEASES 084

Monsters, Inc. / Kiss of the Dragon / Heist / Shallow Hal / The Hustler

TEKKEN 4

OPS2 gets down 'n' dirty with the new King of Fighters.

066

058

062

070

073

RED FACTION 2.....058

If Volition's original blew you away, then brace yourself for this new shooter.

ONIMUSHA 2.....062

Capcom's sequel is finally here, and we've taken it apart in our full review!

PROJECT ZERO.....070

This is a 'must see' for any and every fan of 'shooting' games.

MYST III.....073

STITCH: EXPERIMENT 626.....075

NINJA ASSAULT.....076

METROPOLISMANIA.....077

AKIRA PSYCHO PINBALL.....077

EJAY CLUB WORLD.....078

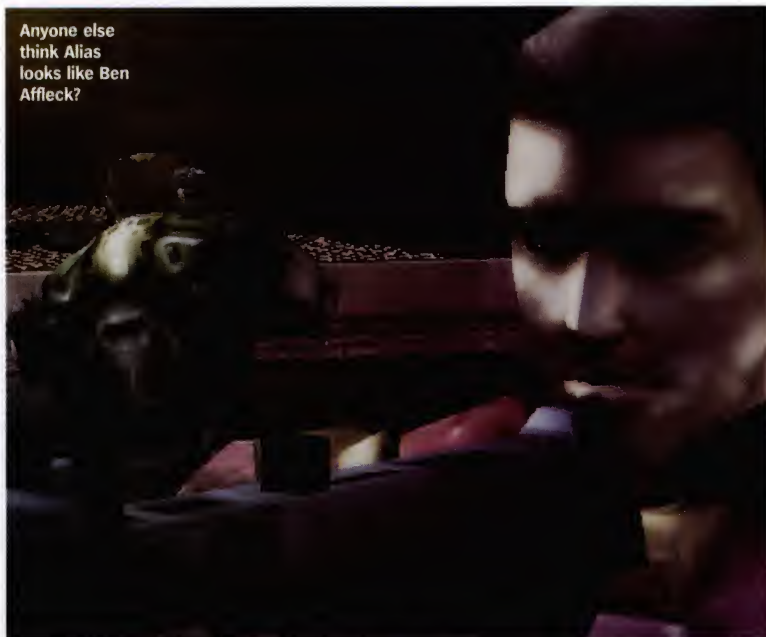
FOOTBALL MANIA.....078

WAY OF THE SAMURAI.....080

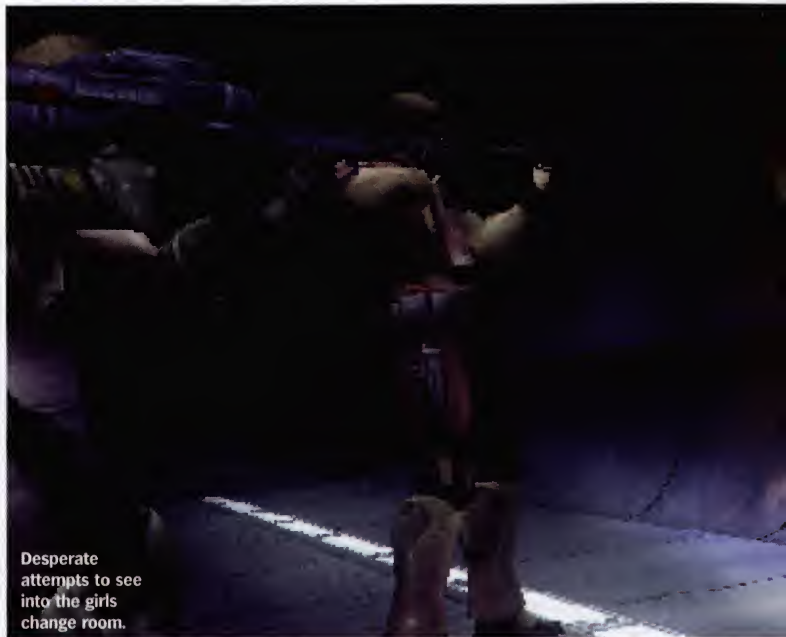
KLONOA BEACH VOLLEYBALL.....081

SUPER BUST A MOVE AGAIN.....081

Anyone else think Alias looks like Ben Affleck?



Desperate attempts to see into the girls change room.



The game is more impressive than the original.

'Geo-mod' technology is back!

"Bloody computers"

"I don't want to hurt you Richie"



RED FACTION 2

Red Faction is back to blow another gaping hole in your social life!



Publisher: THQ
Developer: Volition
Price: \$99.95
Players: 1-4
Out: ?
Web Site: www.redfaction2.com
60Hz Mode: No
Widescreen: No
Surround Sound: Yes

Back story

Inspired by the Amie movie *Total Recall*, *Red Faction* featured a plot about a bunch of miners rebelling against a corrupt mining corporation on Mars. Featuring the best guns in the business and a genuinely thrilling adventure, *Red Faction* came out of nowhere to become one of the most popular titles of last year. If *Red Faction II* shares even half as much success you can bet *Red Faction III* will be coming to a PlayStation 2 near you in 2003.



The guns are bigger, the graphics are better and the missions are longer, but what really sets *Red Faction II* apart from its popular prequel is a much better realised use of the innovative Geo Mod technology. While the original game allowed us to have a lot of fun blowing holes in walls, there wasn't really much of a purpose to all the destruction. Explosive weapons can now be used to tunnel around lethal gun turrets, search for additional weapons in locked rooms and destroy enemy cover. Your foes will often take cover behind corners, riot shields and makeshift barricades but a simple grenade launched in their direction will make rubble out of whatever they were hiding behind.

For the slightly more sadistically inclined players it's also possible to have plenty of explosive fun with the enemies themselves. Nearby explosions will knock soldiers around the room violently and direct hits will turn them into gory confetti. Some of the lucky ones will only lose half their body in the blast, leaving a torso-less pair of legs to slowly crumple to the ground.

INDEPENDENCE DAY

Red Faction II's story centres on a struggle between the people of the Commonwealth and their oppressor, Sopot. You play a member of a group of super-soldiers equipped with nano-technology, whose aim it is to bring the despotic regime down. The action this time around has

For the more sadistically inclined... it's possible to have plenty of explosive fun

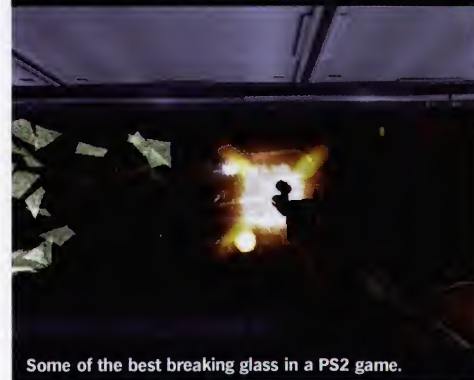
been shifted to Earth, enabling developer Volition to increase the variety of game environments and build in real-time weather. While exploring a rooftop *OPS2* witnessed a swirling rain storm – not too dissimilar to that in the opening scene of *Metal Gear Solid 2*.

A team-based approach to gameplay adds another new dynamic. Although you only ever directly control one character (Alias, a demolitions expert. What else would he be?!) you're always backed up by five other nano-soldiers who can provide anything from covering fire to suggestions as to where to go next.

Each squaddle boasts their own set of unique skills, in areas such as computer hacking, piloting and back-up sniping. By reducing the risk of getting lost, your squad-mates also help improve the pacing of the game. The only problem with your buddies is that they will occasionally stand in your way, blocking your path through a door or down a tight corridor. Without any way to tell them to get out of your way, there's nothing to do but wait for them to move. Shooting them in the back of the head doesn't work either (not that we tried, of course..!)



Night vision levels are particularly fun.



Some of the best breaking glass in a PS2 game.



"Look it's the jeep from that *Halo*, let's blow it up!"

"Did he fire five shots or six?
Go ahead
Punky Brewster,
make my day!"

America's
public schools
are becoming
more violent
each day.

Enemies dance
like puppets to
avoid your
bullets.

"All I ask is for
you to treat me
like a man!"



FUN WITH GUNS

Innovation may not have been at the forefront of the developers' minds when it came to weapons but they definitely enhanced the classics. The same sorts of pistols, machine guns and rocket launchers that dominated *Red Faction's* arsenal are still present but all of them have been tweaked significantly. Rather than looking like unrealistic slabs of metal, *Red Faction II's* guns have plenty of moving parts and feature stylish reloading animations. Favourites include a lethal quad-barrel rocket launcher and a hi-tech assault rifle with a grenade launcher for its secondary fire mode. It's also possible to carry a belt full of grenades that can be lobbed at enemies in between bursts of bullets.

Easily the best thing about the new weapons is the ability to fire two guns at once John Woo-style. Running around with a pair of Uzis blasting away makes for some spectacular firefights. Best of all, both guns have separate ammo clips, so that when you run out of ammo in one gun you can keep firing with the other.

BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

The main action is broken up into regular first-person shooting and vehicle based levels. The on-foot missions are usually just a case killing everything in sight and trying to avoid being shot yourself, but there are a few objectives to complete along the way. Disappointingly, most objectives involve only simple tasks like gaining access to a building or destroying a gunship.



"Hey that blue,
floating thing just
stole my dignity!"

"Man, I shouldn't have taken that acid."

If only we could do this here at the OPS2 Towers.



STIFF COMPETITION

Although *Red Faction II* raises the stakes considerably since its first outing, the problem is that the first-person shooting scene has still evolved faster than it has. *Red Faction's* solid single player game had little trouble competing with the purely multiplayer focus of other PS2 shooters like *TimeSplitters*, *Unreal Tournament* and *Quake 3* but it won't be such an easy victory this time around. *Turok Evolution* and the pretty bloody amazing looking *TimeSplitters 2* are only just around the corner and could well leave *Red Faction II* shooting blanks.

REVIEW

RED FACTION 2



He's so tired he fell of the roof.

"I hate all this destruction"



The comments made by the supporting cast in this game are the funniest lines this side of *Grand Theft Auto III*. Highlights include a wisecracking reporter who boasts how brave he is until your gun being waved in front of his face turns him into a blubbering baby and a budding office romance that can be discovered in an out of the way supply room. One of your teammates also provides a good laugh when he cries "Enough of this shit" and blasts a door open so you can both escape. If only we could do this to all the locked doors in the game.

- The levels are chock-full of gun toting soldiers but it's important not to get carried away with trigger happy antics because there are quite a few innocents that need to be spared. Listening to the innocents beg for their life is pretty funny, especially when they offer to bribe you.

Red Faction II may not challenge you with complex objectives or tricky puzzles but what it does brilliantly is create intense action scenes. Early on in the game you'll find yourself fighting for your life against enemy soldiers that will go to great lengths to kill you. Whether they are blowing their way through walls to make surprise entrances, smashing through glass ceilings and repelling down ropes with guns blazing or just knocking over desks for cover as they dodge your bullets, these soldiers are seriously tough hombres.

The action also moves across many different locations. There are indoor firefights in office buildings, punctuated by near death experiences involving helicopters attacking you with chain guns. Before long the game will move to the war-torn slum areas of the city, forcing you to take cover from roaming tanks in abandoned apartment buildings. Later on in the adventure you will find yourself pinned down and engaged in a hectic sniper battle with enemy soldiers firing from the windows and roofs of nearby buildings.

Like all good shooters these days *Red Faction II* provides players with a number of different vehicles to attack the opposition with. The first chance to give your feet a rest occurs during a

helicopter chase over the city. Before he can be apprehended Sopot jumps into a waiting helicopter and makes a speedy getaway. During the chase one of your team mates takes care of piloting the chopper, leaving you to focus on manning the guns. The level is on-rails but there are plenty of gunships helping Sopot to escape that will keep you busy. To add a little more fun to the action it's also possible to turn the chopper's guns on nearby skyscrapers and shatter every window in sight. Another on rails mission involves riding on top of a high-powered tank as it rolls through the city streets. Hundreds of Sopot's soldiers will try and halt your progress with some serious weaponry but the tank's own guns are more than capable of making a mess of any enemies or buildings that get in your way.

A little later on you will get the chance to get behind the controls of a military submarine. The action in these levels is a little slower but you do have complete control over the sub's direction and its torpedoes are impressively devastating. The last vehicle on offer is a lumbering robot that makes up for its lack of speed by carrying the game's most powerful weapons. No ground forces can survive more than a second against its heavy chain guns and missile launchers. Clunking around the streets in this mechanical behemoth is great fun.

FOUR HEADS ARE BETTER THAN TWO

One of the most improved areas of the game is the multiplayer combat. *Red Faction II*'s single player adventure was engrossing stuff but its multiplayer

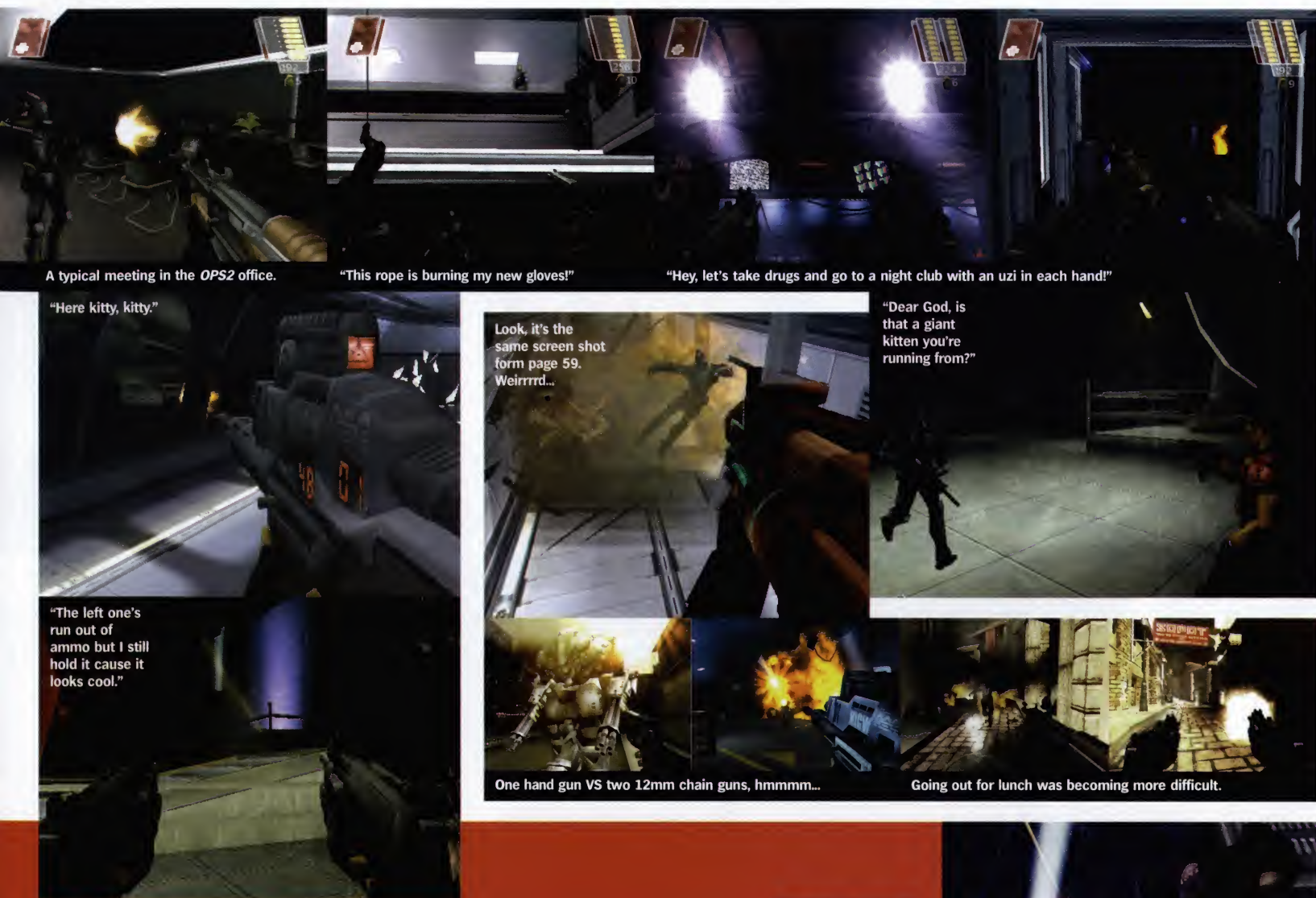
mode was decidedly weak, worse still it only offered deathmatch action for two players. Not only does this game provide us with four player slaying, but it somehow manages to do so at a frame rate that is even smoother than the original game's two player mode. As well as the human players, another two computer bots can be added into the mix, bringing the total up to six combatants.

There are a number of game modes like capture the flag and king of the hill but due to the small amount of players and the confined maps most people will spend a lot more time playing the regular deathmatch. To spice the action up a little Volition has also added in a damage enhancing power-up that doubles your firepower and a Matrix-style slow motion power-up that slows down everybody else's movement.

Some of the maps feel quite similar to the game's single player levels but the majority owe a considerable creative debt to *Quake 3*. A level that features a number of floating platforms in space linked by jump pads is especially reminiscent of *Id*'s shooter. Most maps have some walls that can be destroyed but usually these will be used only to access powerful weapons that have been hidden, rather than digging out camping players.

EASY ON THE EYES

Fantastic lighting effects aside, *Red Faction* wasn't the prettiest game of 2001. The miners' physiques shared a little too much in common with *Lego* men and there were just too many blurry brown



A typical meeting in the *OPS2* office.

"This rope is burning my new gloves!"

"Hey, let's take drugs and go to a night club with an uzi in each hand!"

"Here kitty, kitty."

Look, it's the same screen shot from page 59. Weirrrrrd...

"Dear God, is that a giant kitten you're running from?"

"The left one's run out of ammo but I still hold it cause it looks cool."

One hand gun VS two 12mm chain guns, hmmm...

Going out for lunch was becoming more difficult.

caves to get lost in. Determined to make amends for previous sins, the artists at Volition have completely overhauled the graphics engine and created a real stunner.

The blocky characters have been replaced with realistic muscles for the guys and shapely curves for the girls, and the backgrounds are popping with atmospheric details. When exploring through an office building you'll be pleased to find that everything from the discarded coffee mugs on desks to the stacks of spare paper in the stationary cupboard have all been modelled perfectly. What's even better is that it can all be blasted to smithereens with any of the game's many guns.

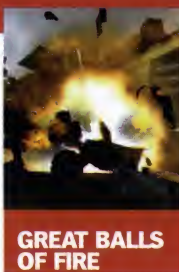
NOT SO FATAL FLAWS

Although they don't impact on the game too heavily there are a number of minor annoyances. The level of demolition at the player's hands is better than we've seen in any other shooter but it's hard not to wish for more. Much of the environment can be turned to dust but there are still lots of disappointingly indestructible elements that will frustrate players. When carrying a rocket launcher powerful enough to destroy tanks it's annoying to find that almost all of the flimsy looking doors in the game are untouched by repeated blasts.

Red Faction II's enemies are also just a little too nimble for our liking. The auto aim feature helps matters a little but because the soldiers run about on screen so quickly it's often quite

hard to target them accurately. This excessive running speed also taints the multiplayer experience. Unless you're using the rocket launcher, hitting other players is much harder than it should be. Plugging a USB mouse and keyboard into the PlayStation 2 does make targeting enemies much easier, and it's great that Volition have added this feature, but far more attention should have been paid to the default controller.

There's no question that *Red Faction* is a slicker and more well rounded shooter than its prequel. The visuals are much more detailed, the multiplayer mode is more fully fleshed out and the Geo Mod engine actually gels with the gameplay. Despite this though, it may not blow gamers of all persuasions as away as they may hope. For any fan of console FPS games though, it's a compulsory must-play. ☐ **Narayan Pattison**

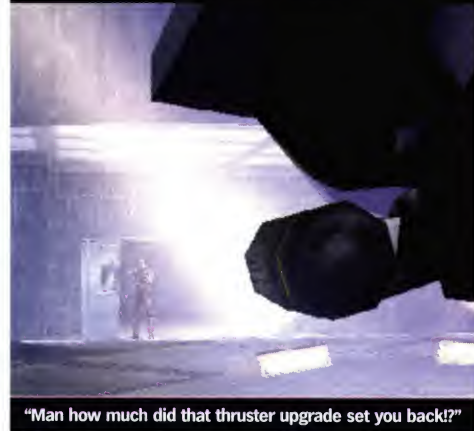


GREAT BALLS OF FIRE

The new ability to toss grenades comes in very handy for dealing with shy groups of enemies hiding behind a lot of cover. The grenades come in the regular detonation and timed varieties, as well as the useful stun grenades. The *OPS2* favourite is still the satchel charges. Throw one on an unlucky enemy and watch him dance like a chicken and shriek in terror.



"Rain, rain go away, come back another day..."



"Man how much did that thruster upgrade set you back!?"

RED FACTION 2

Why we'd buy it:

- It's twice as good as *Red Faction*, and we loved that
- It's got more guns than brain cells

Why we'd leave it:

- We can't afford this and *TimeSplitters 2*
- The Geo Mod still doesn't go far enough

Although more of an evolution than a revolution, *Red Faction II* definitely delivers intense action.

Graphics	The best shattering glass in the world	09
Sound	Decent music and hilarious dialogue	08
Gameplay	Control is smooth and the guns are explosive	09
Life span	Finishing the game isn't easy	08

09

PlayStation 2 VERDICT



Areas look amazing, and are packed with life.



Everybody needs a hero...

ONIMUSHA 2

Suck my soul, survival horror goes to Hell... again.



Publisher: THQ
Developer: Capcom
Price: \$99.95
Players: 1
Out: Now
Website:
www.capcom.com
60Hz Mode: Yes
Widescreen: No
Surround sound: No

Back story

Capcom, creators of the *Resident Evil* series, are the masters of survival horror. The original *Onimusha* was conceived as an N64 title, then switched to the PSone, then finally onto PS2. It was a massive hit, achieving Platinum status, and was re-released on the Xbox as *Genma Onimusha*. But *Samurai's Destiny* is the true sequel.



As soon as the incredible opening movie starts, you know Capcom has created another survival horror gem that is as sharp as a sword.

Onimusha 2 manages to be even more dazzling than its popular predecessor. It has a deep and engaging storyline, exciting sword-based combat and stunning visuals. It also offers more long-term appeal than the original. If you're looking for a revolutionary advance in the genre, you'll have to keep waiting, but for the rest of us we'll be having too much fun to care.

Onimusha was set in 16th century feudal Japan, with Lord Nobunaga Oda resurrected as the head of a demonic army, stalking the Earth and killing human prey. Brave Samurai warrior Samanosuke (with a little help from PS2 owners) rescued Princess Yuki from Nobunaga's clutches and sent him back to hell where he belonged. Or so we thought...

It seems you just can't keep a bad demon down. It is over a decade later and Nobunaga is back. The former lord has vowed to achieve his ancient ambition of forcing all of Japan under his oppressive rule. In the opening scenes, Nobunaga uses his legions to destroy young warrior Jubei Yagyu's village while he is away. With vengeance in his heart, Jubei begins an epic and magical quest to overcome Nobunaga and his army of demons.

Jubei's first task is to seek out a mysterious voice calling his name. When you discover the origin of the voice (our hero's mother), Jubei is given the power to absorb souls of the Genma – the demon legions from the netherworld. So like the original, when your character defeats an enemy, a soul appears that can be collected by holding down the Circle button. There are four colours, each with a different effect. Red Souls are used to enhance your weapons and armour at magic mirrors scattered throughout the game.

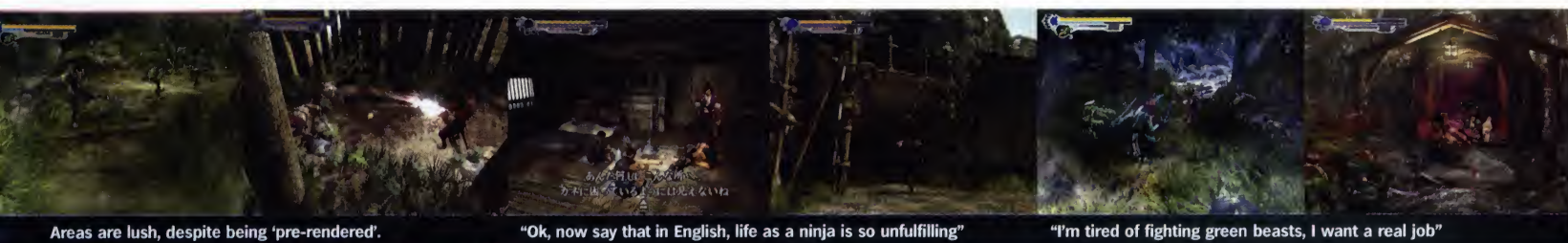
The characters are superbly designed and animated, with realistic facial expressions...

Blue Souls increase your power gauge for performing special attacks, while Yellow Souls increase your character's vitality. A new feature is that collecting five Purple Souls temporarily transforms Jubei into Onimusha – invincible and powerful, and very much like Dante in *Devil May Cry*. It's the soul collection aspect that is the main point of difference between *Onimusha* and the *Resident Evil* titles, adding a layer of depth and the ability to customise your character's abilities. It also encourages you to take on opponents rather than cower in a corner to conserve your ammo like *Resident Evil*.

As already mentioned, the graphics are breathtaking. The game confirms there is still a place for pre-rendered backgrounds, especially when they are so teeming with life and activity as they are here. Detail in the lavish environments is extremely intricate. Players get to explore locations including the lively gold rush town Imasho, the Sacred Place of the Oni Clan overrun with demons, as well as canyons, forests, mines and caves. The characters are superbly designed and animated, with realistic facial expressions and amazing costumes. Few Westerners will appreciate it, but Jubei actually resurrects a popular Japanese actor, Yusaka Matsuda who passed away in 1989. Japanese gamers and Matsuda fans alike, report that the reproduction is staggeringly authentic.

Of course, the trade-off for such dazzling visuals is that the same problems as the original blight the game. The cinematic camera angles heighten the creepy atmosphere, but it can get annoying trying to battle enemies who are off-screen or obscured by something. And it's even more galling being attacked before you even get a glimpse of a foe. Pre-rendered locations also





Areas are lush, despite being 'pre-rendered'.

"Ok, now say that in English, life as a ninja is so unfulfilling"

"I'm tired of fighting green beasts, I want a real job"



Those guys have killer squirrels in their backpacks ready to strike!

What they don't know is that there's killer monkeys hiding in those pots.



On the stairway to Heaven.

"So how's the nightlife here?"

"Alright, it's time to bond."



The squirrels are looking forward to their next meal of human.



Alcohol plays a big part in the game when you try to pick up women in bars.

just don't have the same level of immersion when you can't interact with your surroundings like in a 3D polygon world.

While we're grumbling, *OP2* remains staggered that Capcom so resolutely refuses to update the control mechanism. The clumsy directional controls are unchanged from the original *Resident Evil* and seem totally out of place. You can't even use the analog stick, so as ever your character's movements seem robotic. Fortunately movement is swift and you can hit the R2 button to turn 180 degrees in the heat of battle, a feature you'll need to use often.

The game features a host of new and imaginative undead nasties, big bosses and the (un)welcome return of some of the demons from the original. Players use the Square button in conjunction with the triggers to slash, block, pull off counter-attacks and new combo moves. Triangle unleashes a special attack if Jubel is charged up. As you enhance the various weapons like swords, spears and war-hammers with souls collected, they become much more powerful. You can also use cool long-range weapons such as guns and bows. A cool new feature is that you can now swap weapons

while in the fray of combat. And the fact that your companions often come to your aid in battle (see Friendly Fire) just makes fighting even more entertaining. The only annoyance is the tendency for your character to "lock on" to the wrong target. You'll often belt opponents to the ground, and be ready to lunge for the final kill, only to advance to the next enemy instead. Fortunately it's not a big drama as the pace of the game is so swift.

As well as scrapping with citizens of the netherworld, Capcom has again hampered your heroes' progress with an onslaught of traps and puzzles. Most are quick and entertaining diversions that don't break up the pace or prove to be unwelcome distractions in your journey towards the final showdown with Nobunaga. There's something soothing about those sliding block puzzles after so much violence.

Gold can be collected throughout the game and a new trading element is introduced, the most revolutionary addition of the game. Items collected and bought in shops can be given to other characters. It's a very basic, none-too-subtle system, but works well. For example, early in the game Ekel is sitting at a bar



FRIENDLY FIRE

The original game saw the hero Samanosuke aided by a female ninja. In the sequel, you have four characters who come to your assistance if you can befriend them. They will also give you cool stuff if you give them items that they are interested in, so you need to pay attention to their ramblings, or use our quick guide.

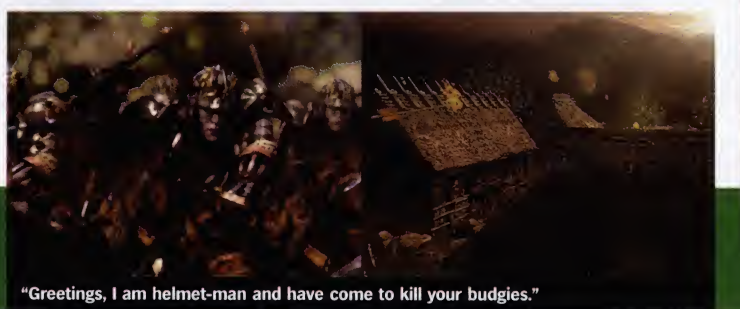
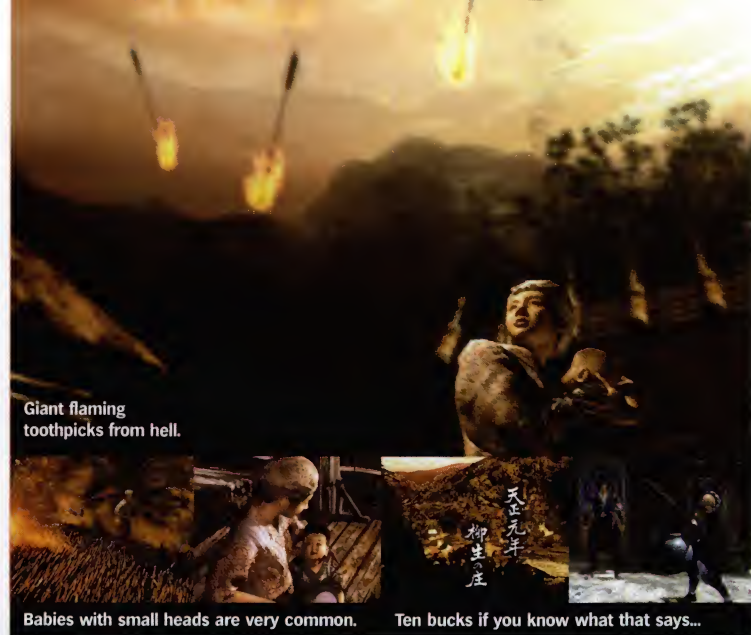


NAME Oyu
FIGHTING STYLE Fencer
LIKES Wearing Western-style armour and showing off her cleavage.
DISLIKES Revealing anything about her mysterious past, particularly her brother.

NAME Ekel
FIGHTING STYLE Spearfighter in the Houzoulin style.
LIKES Eating, drinking and having a good time.
DISLIKES Getting interrupted when he's having a good time with the ladies.

NAME Magolchi
FIGHTING STYLE Marksman
LIKES Wielding a gun as expertly as a sword, and putting his head down in a good book.
DISLIKES Blokes who shoot their mouth off.

NAME Kotaro
FIGHTING STYLE Ninja
LIKES Leaping around like the poncey, feisty young thing that he is, and receiving any little trinkets that tickle his fancy.
DISLIKES The luscious Oyu (another clue as to his sexuality?) and being told what to do.



chatting about how much he loves to drink exotic liquor and nibble on tasty morsels while he gets plastered. Lo and behold in the shop next door you can purchase items like Vodka and smoked herring, which pleases the fat lard no end. For your kindness you'll get treats like gems, medicines and other goodies to trade, and even more importantly you'll be able to rely on your allies in times of trouble. Be careful not to waste items by giving them to unwilling recipients – you'll not only lose the item but your ally will be annoyed. The status of your relationships also shape which other characters you'll play as in the brief episodes in which you step out of Jubel's sandals. All up, it's a welcome attempt to add something extra to the proceedings – just don't expect RPG-style depth.

The adventure couldn't be described as lengthy, but it is certainly longer than the original and there is much to enjoy and replay. The weapons upgrade system encourages players to revisit the adventure and focus on different strengths, and there are also plenty of items to collect. Thanks to the trading system, different paths and playable characters are opened up according to how you have treated your allies. A hard difficulty setting is also included to challenge veterans and there are mini games and other treats to unlock. Final ratings also add to replay appeal, and are dependent on variables like the number of enemies killed, how stylish you were, your number of saves, extras

It doesn't push any evolutionary barriers but the improvements aren't smoke and mirrors, either.

uncovered and your time.

Onimusha 2 is a quality sequel and one of the finest action adventures available on PlayStation 2. It doesn't push any evolutionary barriers but the improvements aren't just smoke and magic mirrors, either. There's plenty here to keep fans of the original more than happy, and newcomers are certainly advised to have a slash or two. We're just hoping that for the inevitable *Onimusha 3*, Capcom choose to match their visual prowess with some long-overdue gameplay advances. **Jason Hill**

ONIMUSHA 2

Why we'd buy it:

- Superb visuals
- Engaging story
- Exciting slash 'em up action

Why we'd leave it:

- Not much innovation
- Hardly frightening
- Not a long adventure

Survival horror fans and beginners alike will have a slashing great time. It mightn't be a giant leap forward, but it's a superb adventure.

Graphics

Few games offer such rich detail

09

Sound

Atmospheric, but the voice work is patchy

08

Gameplay

Entertaining but not ground-breaking

07

Life span

A quality game with replay appeal

07

PlayStation 2 VERDICT



Onimusha 2's undead legions come in all shapes and sizes. They include soldiers, demons with reptilian heads, skeleton warriors, china doll marionettes, steam-powered robots and Bazuu, those annoying rolling monsters from the original game. Dispatching enemies back to the netherworlds not only unleashes souls to absorb, but they often leave precious gold behind too. There are also several bosses to dispatch before the final confrontation with Nobunaga. The first is a four-legged beast that jumps to try and squash you as well as swiping with his nasty hoofs. The second opponent, Gorgan Dantes, is an absolute master swordsman, and you will need more than courage to defeat him...

You'll be astounded by all the extras.



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REVIEW

TEKKEN 4



Namco's fashion team have some funny ideas.



Better fighters than the guests on *Jerry Springer*.

This pair are too cool for school.



Combot shares 'adaptable' similarities with Mokujin.

Anthony 'The Man' Mundine'd rip his arms off. Mmm, maybe not.

TEKKEN 4

The most popular fighter has finally moved into full 3D. *Tekken 4* will turn your lounge room into Fight Club.



Developer: Namco
Distributor: Sony
Players: 1-2
Price: \$89.95
Out: Now
Website: www.namco.com
50/60Hz switching: Yes
Widescreen: No
Surround sound: No

Back story

Tekken appeared in arcades in 1994 and was immediately popular, although overshadowed by Sega's *Virtua Fighter 2*. When the PlayStation launched, *Tekken* came into lounge rooms across the world and a phenomenon was born. All three PSOne games were multi-million sellers and are still being played today. When the PS2 launched, *Tekken Tag Tournament* was alongside it and it has proved to be one of the biggest selling PS2 titles to date.



Thanks to its long and close involvement with PlayStation, Namco's *Tekken* games can lay claim to being the most popular one-on-one fighting games in the world. The original *Tekken* made its debut in arcades way back in 1994, and the first three games sold many millions on the PSone. Those games were almost identical in style but now with the move to the PS2, Namco has finally moved *Tekken* into the third dimension.

For the first time, *Tekken 4* offers fully three-dimensional environments in which to fight - no more single plane where you inched (or ran) from side to side - you can now circle your opponent, dodging blows and waiting for the right time to strike. The arenas are also no longer flat and featureless, there are walls and obstacles as well as differences in terrain and height. This means more freedom of movement and options for strategy, but the basic gameplay remains the same tight 'n' tense fighting action that *Tekken* fans have come to know and love.

WHAT? THERE'S A PLOT?

The underlying plot for *Tekken* has never made much sense, but it continues nevertheless, and this time it's expanded and slightly more comprehensible. While each character has his/her own motivations and background story, communicated through simple yet effective voice-over epilogues, the main plot thread revolves around the highly dysfunctional Mishima family.

Many of the returning characters have some extra moves ... but Jin is completely new.

After researching the remnants of Ogre's blood and skin tissue following the last King of Iron Fist Tournament, Helhachi realises that to succeed in developing a new ultra-powerful life form he will need the Devil Gene. He then discovers that his son Kazuya, whom he thought that he had killed, is still alive and working for the rival G Corporation. More importantly, Kazuya is the carrier of this Devil Gene. The plot thickens...

Meanwhile, Helhachi's grandson Jin has rejected everything to do with the Mishima legacy, and trains in traditional karate in Brisbane in an attempt to balt his escaped son and estranged grandson, Helhachi decides to arrange 'The King of Iron Fist Tournament 4'. Thus, *Tekken 4*, the tournament that will also determine the successor and future of the Mishima Empire, gets underway.

There are 20 playable characters this time around, less than *Tekken 3*, but there's less repetition in style and the fighters are more evenly matched. Lots of familiar faces makes a reappearance, including Nina, King, Yoshimitsu, Bryan, Xiaoyu, Lei, Paul, Julia, Kuma, Hwoarang and Marshall Law, plus three brand new characters. Craig Marduk is a hulking beast of a man; an ex-

champion in the Vale Tudo fighting style who was subsequently jailed for murder.

Christie Monteiro is the daughter of the Capoeira master who taught Eddy Gordo, and Eddy in turn taught Christie the acrobatic martial art before disappearing. British boxer Steve Fox was the world middleweight champion before going on the run from the Mafia after refusing to throw a fight. There's also Combot, a robot that mimics one of the other fighters' styles, but it's unpredictable as it learns a different style for each fight.

The character models aren't too much of an improvement over *Tekken Tag's*, but they are large (Marduk almost takes up almost half the screen) and nicely animated. The fashion ranges from questionable to appalling (lots of '70's disco influences), but it's all very colourful and there are bonus outfits available for those who are into that sort of thing. The worst costume belongs to Helhachi, who most fighters face in the final stage - he's wearing disturbingly brief sumo style 'thong' that just doesn't cover enough of the old man.

ART OF FIGHTING

There have been some significant tweaks to the fighting system but the core four-button controls remain. And the buttons are as responsive as ever, probably smoother than *Tekken Tag* however the timing feels subtly different. Many of the returning characters have some extra moves and animations but Jin is almost completely new, with only about three to four of the moves from *Tekken 3* and



The relationship counselling wasn't paying off.

Tekken 4 - a place for new romance and *Karate Kid* fan societies.

For some reason Yoshimitsu didn't take a liking to the new girl.



Tekken Force mode is now vastly improved over the one seen in Tekken 3.

One bloke walks around with a sword, the other with boxing gloves. They're fighters, not lovers...



Many of Tekken's favourite sons (and bears) are back.

Looks like Nicole Kidman can fight as well as act...



Even while on holiday, the Tekken cast just can't help themselves.

NEW FACES

While most fighters will be familiar to Tekken veterans, there are a few welcome new additions to the roster in Tekken 4. In keeping with tradition of the series, some characters are recurring and will be making a comeback from earlier games. The new fighters fit right into the family, and have their own histories that link them into the Tekken world. Here, we give you a quick run through of the new kids on the block.



CHRISTIE MONTEIRO is the daughter of the Capoeira master who taught Eddy Gordo. After the King of Iron Fist 3, Eddy taught Christie the acrobatic martial art and she proved a very capable student. Eddy suddenly disappeared though, and when Christie heard about Iron Fist Tournament 4, she entered in hope of finding Eddy again.



CRAIG MARDUK is absolutely massive, an ex-champion in the Vale Tudo fighting style, who subsequently lost his way. He became a drifter and a thug, being jailed for murder and getting half an ear bitten off. However he is mysteriously released from prison to compete in the King of Iron Fist Tournament 4.



LEE is a [somewhat disguised] character returning to the Tekken fray. Yep, that's right! The first time you play through Story Mode you'll be playing him as Violet (Lee's secret identity so the Mishimas don't recognise him). Once the mode is finished though, Lee's real identity is revealed and you no longer play as Violet. Lee and Violet look/dress similarly although their costume colours vary.



STEVE FOX was the reigning world middleweight champion but he refused to throw a fight for money and had a price placed on his head by the Mafia. He is on the run and unsure of his genetic heritage, and so has little to lose by entering the Iron Fist Tournament. His punches do major damage but he doesn't have many kicks.

REVIEW

TEKKEN 4



The most impressive Tekken released to

He wanted to be a World Cup star so he went straight to the hair salon.



The new 3D arenas will mean that seasoned fighters will have to re-adjust their tactics.



"Just keep still for a second while I get out this in-grown."



Yoshimitsu gets yet another Ricki Lake makeover.



The big question for hardcore fight fans is "which one is better - Tekken 4 or Virtua Fighter 4?", and that is a debate that has now been raging for years. There's no simple answer, but now that both fight games are available on the same console it is much easier for you to decide for yourself. And make no mistake, critics can say what they want, at the end of the day your favourite will come down to a personal preference. Virtua Fighter remains a "deeper" game, with emphasis on technique and defense, while Tekken remains an offence-heavy, button-bashing funfest. Both games have their fervent fans and ardent detractors but at the end of the day, both games are a lot of fun and it comes down to whatever style pushes your buttons.

□ Tekken Tag remaining the same.

One of the best additions to the gameplay, apart from being able to truly sidestep and circle your opponent, is the ability to trap your opponent against barriers and walls and do some severe damage. Of course, if you're the one being beaten up against the wall, you can try and reverse the position with a throw. Counters and reversals are easy to pull off, and the fighters are very well balanced, with no one character having a monopoly on ass whupping.

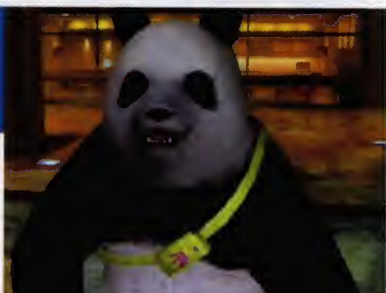
EXTRA MODES

If you've been playing Tekken 4 at the arcades for the past few months you'll no doubt be familiar with the arcade mode, but the PS2 version supplies a whole lot more. The story mode lets you unlock hidden characters and each fighter gets a cinematic after the final battle. Unfortunately there's no Tag mode, but there's Team Battle (gangs of up to eight fighters face off in sequence) and Survival (how many opponents you can beat before losing?), while Training mode is also a bit of fun. Practice mode lets you beat up on a dummy.

Of course, most of your time will probably be spent in Versus mode, and the game will last forever against reasonably matched friends. However if there's no one else around to play with, there's another great mode included - Tekken Force. Much better and far harder than the Tekken 3 version, you must play through four stages of 'scrolling' beat 'em up. It's not completely brilliant, as the camera angles sometimes get in the way and the characters aren't really made for too much movement, but is certainly a great diversion to the main game. It starts off easy enough but gets insanely difficult so it is even bound to test even the hardest of Tekken veterans.

While the sound effects are the same old Tekken noises that will be instantly familiar, the environment graphics have certainly been upgraded since Tekken Tag Tournament. Thankfully the PAL version comes with a choice of 50 or 60Hz so the action will move as fast as your TV allows, and it is also the first game to support true progressive scan, so if you have a new, whiz-bang TV you are in for a treat. There are some tiny graphic problems, mostly clipping as characters move in front of objects, and there's some jaggy bits on occasion, but nothing really gets in the way of the action.

Tekken 4 is a great game; it's as simple as that. It could have had a few more characters, a few more extra features, a few more tweaks in the fighting models, a bit more fine-tuning in the graphics department. But they're just minor quibbles, as Tekken 4 has that old Tekken magic that millions have come to love - it's fast, colourful, adrenalin-charged and supremely playable. What you waiting for - go get your fight on! □ Stuart Clarke



Bash one of the planet's most endangered.



Or a long-haired git in an ugly jacket.

TEKKEN 4

Why we'd buy it:
- Lots of characters to unlock and two-player fun is endless
- Some will find Tekken Force worth the price on its own

Why we'd leave it:
- If you've never like Tekken before, this won't change your mind
- If you don't like one-on-one fighting games
- If you're brain dead

Tekken 4 delivers the same fast and furious fighting action that fans have come to know and love, while the successful move into 3D adds new gameplay elements.

Graphics	Environments and characters are excellent	08
Sound	Solid FX and the soundtrack's non-offensive!	08
Gameplay	It's got that old Tekken magic	09
Life span	You never get tired of beating up your mates	09

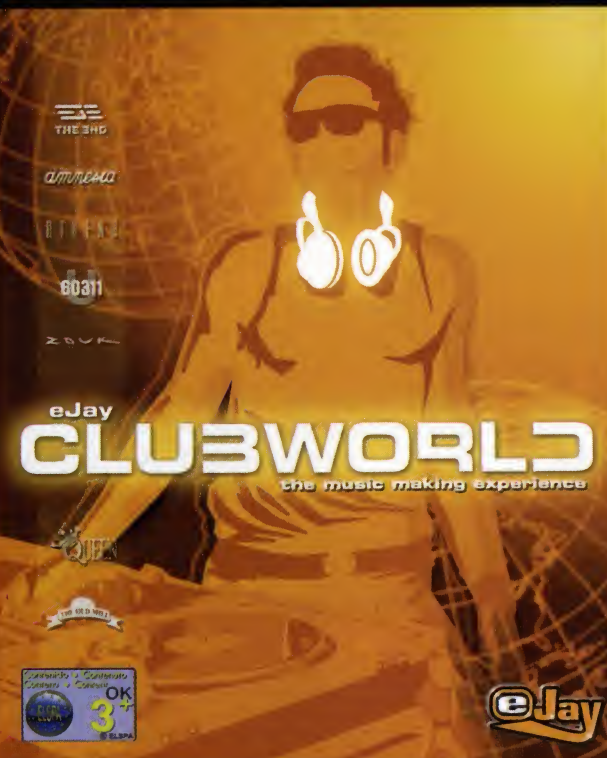
09

PlayStation 2 NERDICT

eJay Clubworld



PlayStation 2

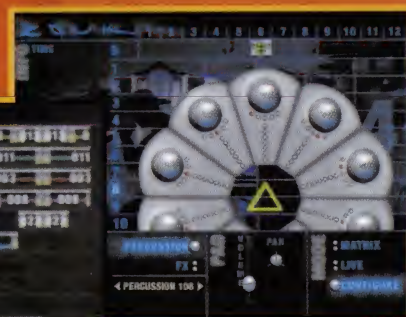
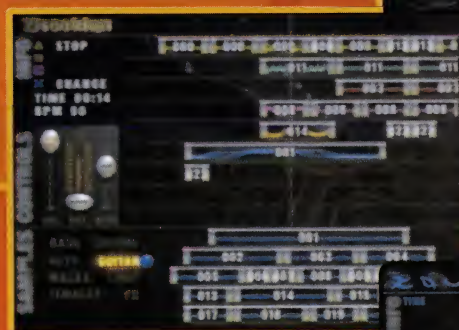


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Kicking ghost butt with Project ZERO's unique camera combat system.



Miku's torch is her only means of seeing in some of the more gloomily lit sections.

Stone mirrors act like keys to doors.



Stone Mirror

A beautiful stone polished to a mirror-like finish. It possesses strange powers.

PROJECT ZERO

Snap the supernatural in Tecmo's original photo shooter.



Publisher: Wanadoo
Developer: Tecmo
Price: \$99.99
Players: 1
Out: Now
Website: www.tecmo.co.jp/product/zero/index2.htm
60Hz mode: Yes
Widescreen: No
Surround sound: No

Back story

Tecmo is the Japanese based publisher/developer of the *Dead Or Alive* series and the forthcoming next-gen remake of *Rygar*. It has also worked on other non-European releases such as *Monster Rancher 3* and *Gallop Racer 2002*. Project ZERO has already been released in the US under the alternative moniker *Fatal Frame*, alluding to the innovative camera-based combat system. Now that'll sell it to the Yanks.



Using ghosts to frighten an audience has become something of a flaccid concept for the horror movie industry. Think of traditional spectres these days and the first image that comes to mind is an episode of *Scooby-Doo* and someone wearing a white sheet with eye-holes cut in it. See, the best ghost films have always *hinted* at otherworldly presences rather than actually shown them – think *Poltergeist*, *The Sixth Sense*, *The Shining* and, most importantly here, cult Japanese horror film *Ring*. Beyond that, it all gets a bit *Casper the Ghost*.

Back in PS2 Land though, a miracle has occurred. Tecmo's cinematic horror game *Project ZERO* has managed to buck this trend by somehow making ghosts scary again. No, scrap that – *Project ZERO* has managed to make ghosts truly *terrifying*. The developer achieves this with the help of a nightmarish back story and that aforementioned power of suggestion. There's no comedy white-sheeted nonsense here – these ghosts are angry and you're going to know it. They're the spirits of people who've been subject to hideous ritual abuse, torture, strangulation and hangings. They haunt the Himuro house, a derelict, creaking, perpetually dark marriage of Amityville and the Bates' residence, and create an edgy sense of foreboding which *Project ZERO* thrives on.

Plot time. Mafayu, an investigative journalist, visits the notorious house to try and uncover the secrets of its past. It's a doomed mission from the start and after nine days and Mafayu's subsequent disappearance, it's left to Mafayu's sister Miku to search the mansion and rescue her sibling.

Project ZERO effectively primes you for what to expect by making you play the opening level in grainy black and white. In this prologue (which also serves as an introduction to the game's main functions) you play as the ill-fated Mafayu, retracing his last steps before he's attacked by a spirit manifesting itself as a hallway of human

Tecmo's cinematic horror game somehow makes ghosts truly terrifying again

hands. Cleverly, the camera switches to the first-person at this point, pitching you right into the middle of the claustrophobic terror. It's a chilling introduction to the game's cinema verité style, a scratchy monochrome 'shaky cam' which makes the contorted ghostly apparitions flitting in and out of your line of vision all the more unsettling.

After the screen fades to white, the game begins in earnest. You now assume the role of Miku in the same spot as her brother disappeared, only now the display shows muted colour a la *Silent Hill 2*. That means you can now enjoy *Project ZERO*'s main innovation – the use of a camera as a combat system...

READY FOR YOUR CLOSE-UP?

Where *Silent Hill 2* gave you wooden planks and shotguns, and *Resident Evil* equipped you with crossbows and AK-47s, *Project ZERO*'s entire arsenal consists of a single camera. Not a whistles and bells digital camera, complete with 007 gadgetry, you understand, but a simple Brownie point-and-click. Thankfully this is no ordinary camera: it's a family hand-me-down that boasts supernatural powers. Most importantly, it enables Miku to 'extinguish' evil ghosts who attack her. Each click of the shutter takes a proportion of power from the spirit, and if a shot is suitably close up, more damage is inflicted. The camera isn't just a weapon, though. It also gives you the ability to reveal hidden images in doors and walls and remove talismanic powers from certain areas.

Back in the real world, you could argue that most PS2 gamers want blood, guts, gore and heavy

THE ROPES OF WRATH

Project ZERO's story has some basis in fact, at least as far as religious symbolism goes.



A touch curious about the strange ropes that are continually mentioned as you pick up fragments of info on your way round the house, OPS2 investigated whether they had any grounding in real life.

We discovered that these ropes are called 'shimenawa' and are used to mark a sacred precinct, traditionally believed to ward off evil and sickness in the Japanese Shinto religion. On New Year's Eve, people hang shimenawas over doorways or the front bumpers of cars to protect them from evil in the year ahead. In *Project ZERO*, however, they are used for far more unpleasant purposes (cue spooky cackle)...



The Pointing Girl. The more of these passive ghosts you picture, the more points you earn.

"Dammit woman, this is no time for heavy drinking." Miku takes a nap.



The Himuro mansion is filled with strange artefacts.



Woman Pulled In



Once you've snapped your ghost, add it to your gallery.



Getting gripped by a ghost is quite a terrifying experience. Not least because it makes the screen do this. Your power is sapped quickly, too.

artillery from their action games. Taking pictures of ghosts in a haunted house? Bor-ing, right? Well, admittedly, *Project ZERO* won't be to everyone's tastes. But dismiss it so glibly and you'd be missing out on the most thoroughly frightening PS2 experience yet. Makoto Shibata, the game's Project Director, went on the record with *OPS2* saying, "All the elements of *Project ZERO* are in place to achieve a concept that is to experience genuine fear." And he wasn't lying.

HOUSE OF TERROR

Exploring the Himuro residence is a genuinely tense and disturbing experience. It's difficult to see clearly, because there's not much light and Miku's torch only illuminates a small area of her environment. This leads to shadows and objects scattered around the rooms taking on strange shapes that could, out of the corner of your eye, be mistaken for ghosts.

Enhancing the atmosphere are random unsettling sound effects: knocks, creaks, static, garbled chanting and, most disturbingly of all, babies crying. Then there's the clever use of mirrors. These are often positioned so that you

only see them through torchlight, your pulse rate jumping for a split-second before you realise it's just your own reflection.

The game camera itself doesn't just mimic horror cinema, it takes it one step further. Every camera shift and pan is structured to give you the most eerie view of a given situation. In particular, it will obscure what's round the corner or head off in front of Miku, hiding what lies ahead. In other areas, such as the gardens, the camera retreats behind trees, suggesting a voyeuristic presence is watching her. Of course, the nauseating twist here is that you're the one being watched rather than just a passive viewer of the action.

Project ZERO's imagery is often spine-chilling. One hallway near the start has a series of ropes dangling mysteriously from the ceiling, but the suggestion as to what they might have been used for is left entirely to your imagination. Elsewhere, you come across a room full of wooden dolls and, distressingly, a 'blinding' room. The ghosts themselves come in both 2D and 3D forms, but all have a fuzzy and transparent quality, complete with eyeless faces and mouths almost dripping off in agony. Some are children (think the spooky twins) →

THE SIXTH SENSE

Your magical camera is able to see beyond the real world and can offer clues to help Miku progress through the Himuro residence. Here's how it's done:



1. FIND A PORTAL DOOR

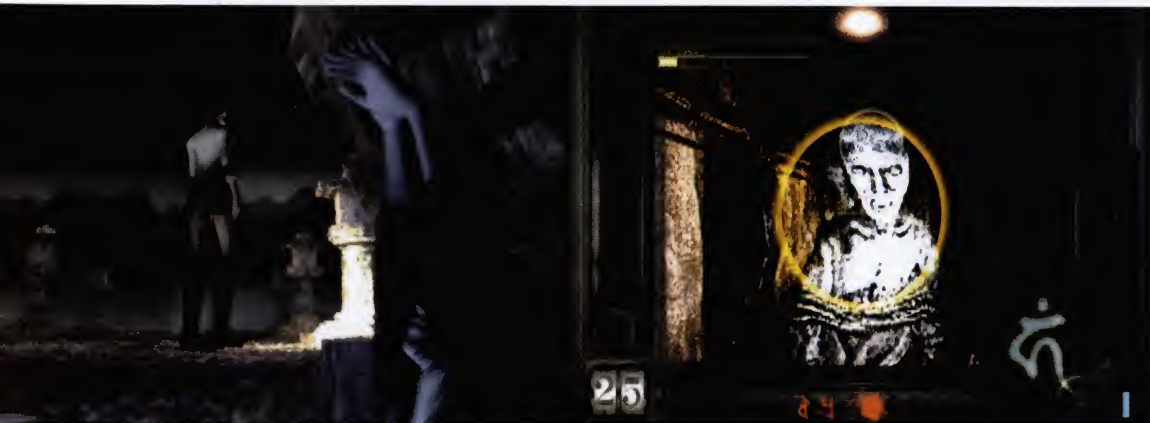
Doors that are possessed by some kind of talismanic force have a tendency to look like a wobbling jelly. They also have a note attached to them.

2. TAKE A SNAPSHOT OF IT

The note on the door doesn't say, "Two pints today, please." It tells you the door's sealed by a spirit. Take its picture and wait for the magic to happen.

3. GASP IN AWE

In this case, the door dramatically morphs into a water wheel, indicating where Miku is to go next. The water wheel's story is told in a subsequent cut-scene.



Cut-scenes often reveal where nasties are hiding. For sharp shooters, the close-up shot is indicated by this orange ring.



There are buttons with characters. This device must open the door.

Some parts of the house are sealed by number puzzles.

□ In *The Shining*; others are headless, display dreadful wounds or crawl relentlessly towards you, grasping at your ankles. Charming.

SHOCK THERAPY

Contact with spirits causes the screen to turn grainy and Miku's heart to pump, which is conveyed to the player via a now-rumbling Dual Shock. Should you then get ensnared by a ghost, the screen switches to a colour negative as you're unceremoniously mauled. Because these visual treatments seem so alien to videogames, the result is incredibly effective. Finally, we're seeing horror imagery on a console usually reserved for the dark realms of underground cinema.

But don't go away thinking *Project ZERO* is just about shock factor. The game's structure is compulsive and intriguing enough to give anyone who enjoys an adventure-based explore-'em-up a good ten hours' play as they attempt to uncover the truth behind Mafuyu's disappearance. The only problems we had were down to inferior collision detection. This meant we had to adjust Miku's orientation in order to pass through gaps or face a *Resi*-style moonwalking effect as she bumped into invisible barriers. Another folble that might irritate less patient players is the game's slow pace. The unique combat system can also take a while to familiarise yourself with.

Our one true residing memory of *Project ZERO*, however, is that of one of the most genuinely disturbing moments ever seen in a videogame.

Ghosts come complete with eyeless faces, their mouths dripping off in agony.

Finding ourselves locked in a dark room with our ghost indicator flashing and pad a-thumping, we knew that something, somewhere, was hidden in the shadows. After ten minutes of pacing around, we decided the game was lying and prepared to leave the room. On the way out – and noticing that if you walked past a certain point Miku looked slightly roofwards – we flipped to camera mode one last time and looked up and... BLOODY HELL! There's a dead bloke hanging from the ceiling! THAT'S DISGUSTING! Only a videogame? Don't believe a word... □ George Walter

PROJECT ZERO

Why we'd buy it:
- At last, an entirely original concept
- Genuinely scary gameplay and story
- It has its own unique style

Why we'd leave it:
- Slow-paced, even lumbering in places
- Can actually become quite depressing
- Questionable collision detection

Project ZERO should be applauded for its unique gameplay and horror visuals. Its problems will fade into the background for those who embrace its unnerving charms.

Graphics	Hugely atmospheric, with brand-new effects	08
Sound	Guaranteed to set your molars on edge	08
Gameplay	A new idea, so it takes a while to get used to	08
Life span	Replay value with unlockable modes	07

PlayStation 2 VERDICT

SUPER SNAPS

Although the camera is Miku's only means of attack, you can upgrade it in two different ways:



Type-74 Film

FILM UPGRADES

As you investigate the house, you'll find several different types of film: Types 14, 30, 74 and the extremely effective Type 90. The higher the number, the more effective the film is at dispatching ghosts. We highly recommend you save the Type 90 for when you replay the game in aptly-named Nightmare mode. Trust us, you'll need it. We did...



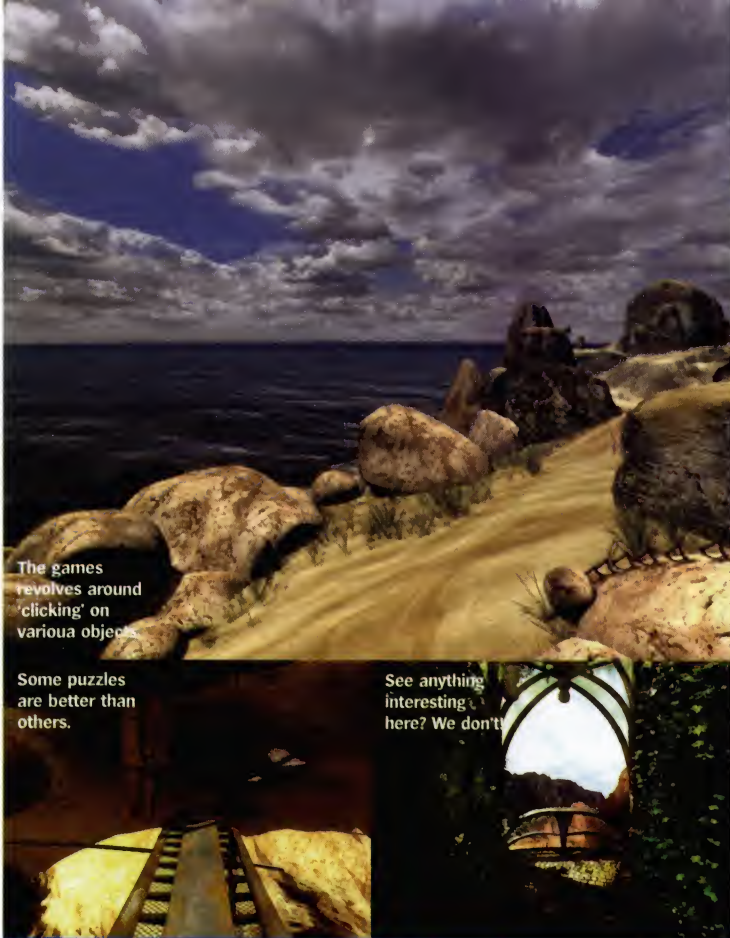
Spirit Stone

SPIRIT STONES

The more Spirit Stones you collect during your investigations, the more of the camera's auxiliary functions are revealed. These include faster wind-on and zoom functions. Dead handy in battles with particularly stubborn ghosts during later levels.



Another spook is seen off with a click of George's funcam.



The games revolves around 'clicking' on various objects.

Some puzzles are better than others.

See anything interesting here? We don't.

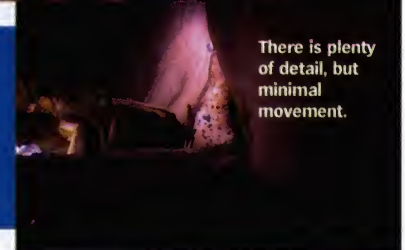


The adventure will take you to many exotic worlds.

This is Temptation Island, *Myst III* style.



A sci-fi fans dream landscape - stuff everywhere!



There is plenty of detail, but minimal movement.

MYST III: EXILE

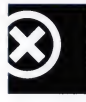
The PC classic comes to PS2, but are our attention spans tough enough?



Publisher: Ubi Soft
Developer: Presto Studios
Price: \$99.95
Players: 1
Out: Now
Web site: www.cyanworld.com
60Hz Mode: No
Widescreen: No
Surround Sound: No

Back story

Myst, and its sequel *Riven*, are two of the best selling games of all time. Both titles are brilliantly constructed adventures that help us to forget the pissweak real-time 3D version of the original that snuck out a while ago. Moving onto the third real instalment in the series, *Myst III* was created by a new team, Presto, but it maintains the same mix of the original classics. Presto has previously been responsible for PC games like the *Journeyman Project*.



While we've been busy busting up zombies and tinkering with touring cars the *Myst* series has dominated the screens of millions of computers around the world. The *Myst* games have always been light on action but their photo-realistic graphics and brain-bending puzzles have gathered many fans.

The game's events focus around Atrus, a strange bloke who can write magical books that physically transport the reader to bizarre new worlds. As usual a jealous sod called Saavedro turns up, pinches Atrus' favourite book, sets fire to his studio and disappears in a flash of cheesy acting. Atrus, being a typical 'the pen is mightier than the sword' kind of scholar, leaves the nasty job of chasing after Saavedro and roughing him up to you.

For anyone who's *Myst* the boat, here's a refresher: Adventures like *Myst* are called 'point and click' games because players explore the events from a first-person perspective, using a hand that floats about on screen to point and click on objects of interest. Wherever you stand, you will be able to spin 360 degrees and look at anything you want. Clicking on the path in front of you will teleport you to the next pre-rendered view of the world. Unlike most adventures, there are no physical characters to move about, but by clicking on various parts of the environment you can move to most places.

As you'd expect from a game that focuses on puzzles, the brain teasers always dangle the solution right in front of you, without frustrating you so much that you want to hurl the disc out the window. You'll soon be pushing buttons, pulling levers and manipulating everything in sight. To keep things from getting painful almost all of the machinery you operate affects something in the same room, and if it doesn't you'll see a cinema displaying the result of

your actions. This doesn't mean the game's puzzles are a cake walk. The developers balanced the user friendliness of the puzzles against a lack of hints. Refusing to be seduced by any of today's sexy 3D technology, *Myst III* is a polygon-free zone. *Myst*'s world is brought to life by thousands of static backgrounds. While these locations lack 3D movement, they do manage to deliver highly detailed snapshots of a convincing world, filled with the sort of organic, alien architecture that polygons are still years away from being able to create. The backgrounds do feature some animation, like rippling water and birds flying overhead but for every one animated object there are ten static ones.

Myst is all about the puzzles. The storyline and the backgrounds are really just there to give the developers an excuse to lay the mental smack down. The puzzles are fantastic and solving them is rewarding but you need some serious patience to survive. If the first thing you do is the crossword in the newspaper then get up a copy now. If you can't past headlines like "Horror bus crash barbecues tourists" then give this a miss. ☐ Narayan Pattison

MYST 3: EXILE

Why we'd buy it: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- We want to pound our brain into submission with serious puzzles- Our PC isn't powerful enough to run the game		Why we'd leave it: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- We can see more action at a lawn bowls tournament- We can't play anything without polygons	Light on action but heavy on puzzles, patient gamers will find it just right!
Graphics	Stunning but stagnant	07	
Sound	Plenty of that rousing orchestral stuff	08	
Gameplay	A thinking man's game	08	
Life span	About 20 hours to see it through	07	

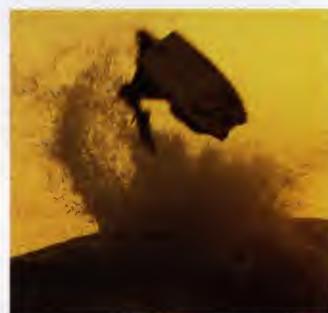


IT'S CHILD'S PLAY

You might remember him from such classics as *The Exorcist III* or *Critters 4* but Brad Dourif's main claim to fame is as the voice of the serial killing cuddly toy, Chucky. In *Myst III* Dourif hams it up well as Saavedro, the creepy nemesis of Atrus and Catherine. Keep an eye out for Brad this Christmas when he will play the lovable Wormtongue in *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*.



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The game is based around Stitch, from *Lilo and Stitch*.

REVIEW

STITCH: EXPERIMENT 626

Despite a few highlights, much of the gaming is a non-event.

The visuals need work. It looks weak, for a PS2 game.

STITCH: EXPERIMENT 626

Experiment in what? Releasing a game that seems only half finished?

Publisher: Sony
Developer: High Voltage
Price: \$99.95
Players: 1
Out Now
Website:
<http://www.high-voltage.com/>
60Hz Mode: No
Widescreen: No
Surround Sound: No



You have to hand it to big business. They really know how to squeeze the blood out of a licence. *Stitch: Experiment 626* is a classic example as it's not even based on a movie per se, but rather details the history of one of the lead characters in the upcoming Disney feature *Lilo and Stitch*. But there's no mawkish relationship to be seen at all in this title, rather it's an out and out third-person shoot 'em up with a bit of platforming on the side.

Unfortunately the game doesn't seem complete, and is lacking in the most surprising areas. You would think that in a shooter where the character has unlimited ammo, there would be hordes of intimidating enemies that would attack in merciless waves but this is not the case. There are few

enemies, with most of the levels consisting of blue crystal rocks and other harmless objects that can be shot and destroyed for health and other collectables. On top of that, it seems that there are a ton of feats that simply cannot be accomplished without the player sacrificing some of health. Rather than fix this up it seems that the developers have opted instead to give the player infinite lives.

It's not as if 626's only flaw is its gameplay either – it looks like an average PSOne game with higher resolution. The levels aren't just devoid of enemies, but of anything interesting. In fact that's one of the signs that you can shoot something – it's there. It's strong animated feel is no excuse for humdrum visuals – all they need to do is take a look at *Herdy Gerdy*. ☐ **James Ellis**

STITCH: EXPERIMENT 626

Why we'd buy it:
- Lunatic space freaks make us feel happy

Why we'd leave it:
- Doesn't seem to have much of a point to it

Graphics 04
Sound 07
Gameplay 05
Life span 04

Mindless tripe of a shooter, and a waste of a cool character.

04

PlayStation 2 VERDICT

TRUST NOTHING FEAR EVERYTHING



"This game is going to scare the crap out of you"
- Gamespy

"The action is leaps and bounds ahead of anything you've seen in a Resident Evil title"
- Game Informer (USA)

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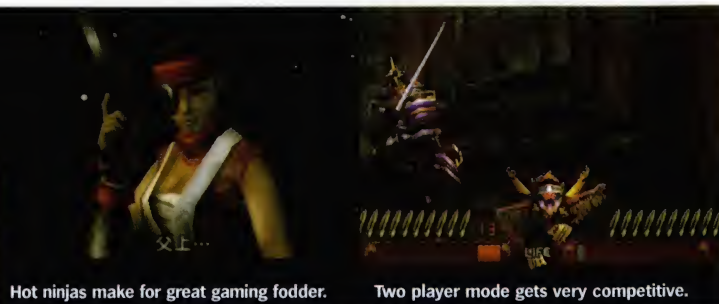
YET TO BE CLASSIFIED

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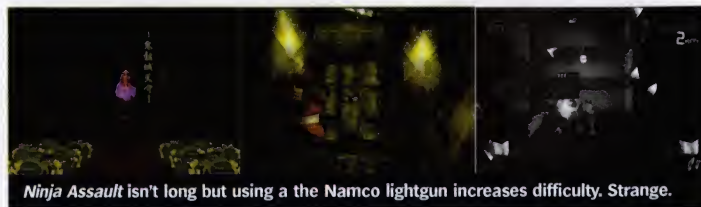


A fine looker, but not up to the standard of *Vampire Night*.



Hot ninjas make for great gaming fodder.

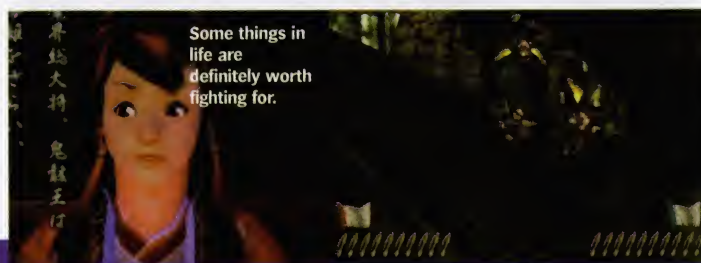
Two player mode gets very competitive.



Ninja Assault isn't long but using a the Namco lightgun increases difficulty. Strange.



Increasing the Difficulty level only serves to make you more prone to damage.



Some things in life are definitely worth fighting for.

The levels provide good variety.



The ninjas are suitably fast and nimble.



TIME TO DIE

Isn't it always odd the way enemies tend to make a stupid speech before they cark it. Having just shot em full of more holes than South's back line they still raise themselves pathetically on one elbow and manage to bang on about some old bollocks for a while before collapsing like they should. In *Ninja Assault* this happens a lot and is at times almost comic. Indeed the quality of the spoken word stuff is pretty abysmal with some really corny voiceovers, and when you consider that the music is pretty rubbish as well you'd almost be better off chucking in a Slipknot CD and turning the game audio off.

Developer: Namco
Distributor: Sony
Players: 1-2
Price: \$99.95
Out: TBC
Website: www.namco.com
50/60Hz switching: Yes
Widescreen: No
Surround sound: No

Back story

Namco pretty much have a mortgage on the PS2 gun game genre. Indeed, this trend began back on the original PlayStation with classics like *Point Blank* and the game which started it all - *Time Crisis*. While it is true to say that the genre hasn't evolved much when it comes to innovative play dynamics as the formula has remained the same, the more recent efforts are a mile ahead of their predecessors in terms of visuals and atmosphere. That's why we keep on returning to them for a quick blast



Looking at the list of subjects which developers rate as being funky and popular you'd have to agree both ninjas and demons score pretty high on the Schwing-Meter. So it comes as no surprise that Namco have followed up their recent *Vampire Night* with a game that features both.

The gist of *Ninja Assault*: you have to rescue the fair maiden Koto from a nefarious Shogun-demon type called Kigga. Naturally this leads to a lot of gunplay where you dispatch legions of demons and ninjas as you follow the trail back to Kigga's hideout. Now tossing the uninspired plot to one side (where it belongs!) the game is about taking on lot of nimble opponents and blasting the lil buggers before they heave their knife, spear, arrow or boulder your way.

So it is very much business as usual for *Time Crisis* addicts. There are lots of camera pivots, lots of enemies leaping from above, coming up from the ground below and there is even the old cliché, a stage where you are on a barge drifting down a river while being attacked from all sides.

That said, the levels in *Ninja Assault* do deliver variety. You also get to score bonus points by killing hidden enemies and there are health and weapon power ups. You will be grateful when you have scored the 'smart bomb' weapon which hits everything on screen bloody hard and the health powerups are useful. However it is worth pointing out that as far as gun games go *Ninja Assault* isn't going to fry your brain.

The game suffers a bit when compared to its contemporaries. There are no non-hostile characters you have to save and the visuals aren't as crisp.

There are lots of enemies onscreen and you will have to maintain a very hefty rate of fire at times to dispatch them. If you're playing with a skilled friend

or use the standard Joypad the game is quite easy to beat in Normal mode. Expect to do it in a couple of tries. The automated 'lock on' assist is very helpful, some might say too much so. The difficulty can be increased, but the only real effect this seems to have is by dramatically increasing the amount of damage done to your character.

Using the light gun is another matter. You can forget playing the game as Namco intended unless you are very good and have a TV which is at least 60 cm in size. The gun mode is much harder, which is odd seeing it is the point with this sort of game.

So where does that leave us? *Ninja Assault* does have a few good points to recommend it. It makes sense to have the ninjas leaping all over the place and the variety of foes is decent enough to keep you thinking. The training games are OK but nothing special and there are four story mode paths to take.

The bosses are disappointing. Apart from the demonic skull of Kigga and the Dragon Queen, the bosses get shredded faster than they should.

If you liked the coin-op you'll enjoy this, but it's not a great lightgun shooter. ☐ Steve Polak

NINJA ASSAULT

Why we'd buy it:
- Ninjas and Demons make for a fun marriage of foes
- Good fast food gaming

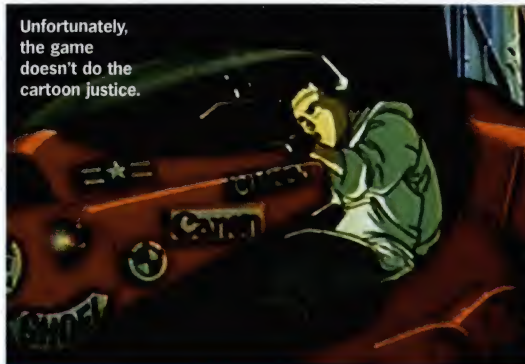
Why we'd leave it:
- Generic gun game experience
- Dodgy techno soundtrack
- You'll finish it quickly

Fast, frenetic and full of demonic ninjas but also not frightfully good.

Graphics	<i>Vampire Night</i> looks better	07
Sound	Stoopid techno really grates	06
Gameplay	We have all been here before	07
Life span	The four story modes extend this only	06

06

PlayStation 2 VERDICT



Unfortunately, the game doesn't do the cartoon justice.



Played one pinball game, played 'em all!



Don't expect sustained gameplay longevity.

AKIRA PSYCHO BALL

Psycho as in BAD. A morally bankrupt waste of a great licence.

Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Bandai
Price: \$89.95
Players: 1-2
Out: Now
Website:
<http://www.bandaiames.channel.or.jp/list/akira/base.html>
60Hz Mode: No
Widescreen: No
Surround Sound: No



It's no stretch to suggest that the majority of games based on film or other pop culture licenses have tended to be disappointing. There have been exceptions, but overall they have a tendency to leave players disappointed. *Akira Psycho Ball*, a name I just cannot take seriously, might just be the purest manifestation of the latter.

For those of you who don't know, *Akira* was a Japanese cartoon before being made into a feature length anime film. It featured motorcycle gangs, experimentation on humans and a city on the verge of destruction. With all the potential game possibilities it's baffling that the developers have decided make a pinball game. The presentation of the game is quite good, scattered with FMVs of the

film running behind game boards as well as acting as cut-scenes for bonuses like Multi-ball. There are four boards you can play on based on locations from the film. The first board is in fact, designed for two-player action and you must defeat the computer in a Battle Mode before progressing to the normal single player boards.

Two human players can come back and duke it out later on, though. Admittedly it's not just about mundane points harvesting as players actually have to collect keys on each board in order to progress through the game. But at the end of the day, the whole game is just pinball and it's been done a thousand times over. This is the sort of thing you'd expect tacked onto an action-adventure game as an extra. Hint, hint. ☐ James Ellis



Akira fans are likely to be disappointed.

AKIRA PSYCHO BALL

Why we'd buy it:
- Because we're just "psycho"

Why we'd leave it:
- I think I've played this one before

Graphics: 07
Sound: 07
Gameplay: 03
Life span: 04

A decent offering but many gamers will find it lacking that fun factor.

05

PlayStation 2 NERDICT



Despite the simple gameplay mechanics, the graphics are flat.

It's actually somewhat satisfying watching your city grow.

METROPOLISMANIA

Plays more like a day at the office than a wild night on the town.

Publisher: Ubi Soft
Developer: Media Factory
Price: \$99.95
Players: 1
Out: Now
Web Site:
<http://www.natsume.com/games/METRO/>
60Hz Mode: No
Widescreen: No
Surround Sound: No



Metropolismania is an unusual game in a market full of clichés. The game kicks off with a didactic spiel about how people in society don't talk to each other, instead relying on the convenience offered by modern culture. In a bid to remedy the situation you are assigned the job of socialite Metropolis maker and are tasked with developing a community out of a flat barren 3D landscape, marking out streets and selecting building sites for arriving residents and business. As more people move in, it's your job to get to know them and improve the relationship which will lead to them introducing you to more people who want to join the community. It's quite a blast to see houses, units, shops, schools and business built from the ground, full of residents who

roam the streets by both foot and vehicle.

That said, there have been a number of graphical concessions that have been made in favour of keeping the game smooth, including simple cartoony graphics and textures. Even the main character model, dressed in a pimp-like yellow suit is devoid of any solid animation or detail. This could've only been a small fault had it not been for the fact that once your city grows to a respectable size things start to get boring quickly. A massive amount of new people is needed in order to keep the gameplay ticking along, and most of these encounters contain repetitive dialogue that only serves to agitate. As things get dull you realise that the novelty has eroded away, revealing a grinding experience. ☐ James Ellis



Try and improve your relationships.



The dialogue tests the patience.

METROPOLISMANIA

Why we'd buy it:
- We love kooky Japanese games

Why we'd leave it:
- To avoid hours of computer dialogue

Graphics: 05
Sound: 05
Gameplay: 05
Life span: 04

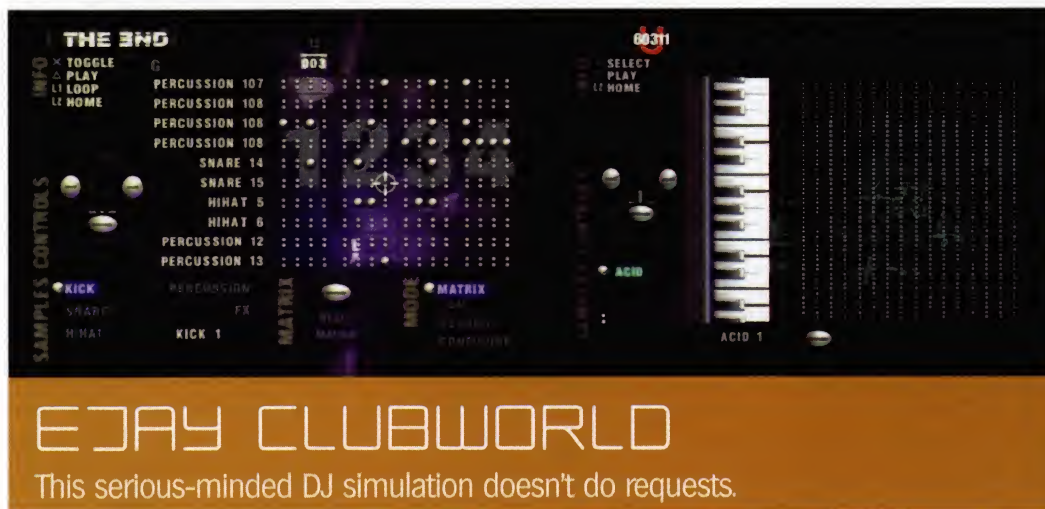
Original and initially enjoyable, but goes down hill fast.

05

PlayStation 2 NERDICT

REVIEW

EJAY CLUBWORLD :: FOOTBALL MANIA



EJAY CLUBWORLD

This serious-minded DJ simulation doesn't do requests.



Publisher: Empire Interactive
Developer: EJay Corporation
Price: \$99.95
Players: 1-4
Out: September
Website: www.ejay.com
60Hz mode: No
Widescreen: No
Surround sound: No
Peripherals: MultiTap



Own a record bag and a copy of *Trance Nation*? Yes? Then you too can put down 'DJ' under 'occupation' on your passport! Thing is, if *eJay Clubworld* is anything to go by, this dance music malarkey is a lot harder than we've just tried to make it sound.

Skip past the Carl Cox intro and you're straight into the mixing beat, selecting one of eight clubs in which to fashion your urban floor-filler. Each location corresponds to a different style of music and there are a total of over 10,000 samples to select, depending on the genre. Alongside standard categories, like keyboards, bass and loops, each club also includes extra samples tailored to suit its sound. You're advised to use vocals sparingly – unless you actually want to create a cheesy track.

Designing small sections is simple enough, but trying to structure a four-minute 20-track tune proves a tad trickier. A Tutorial mode is included, but it only covers the basics rather than offering advice on how to create a classic. Despite being cleanly laid out, the interface is initially confusing, although repetition means selecting and inserting samples soon becomes second nature. Gradually, you learn how to layer different sounds – and then you'll be mixing stabs over loops with ease.

Well, maybe. As with other music creators, how much you get out is directly proportional to how much you're prepared to put in.

Ultimately, it's striving for perfection that makes *eJay* special. There's nothing to rival the satisfaction when your piece takes shape. □ Tim Clark



Generate trippy images to your music.



Use your Dual analog sticks to 'scratch'!

EJAY CLUBWORLD

Why we'd buy it:

- Hugely enjoyable when a tune comes together

Why we'd leave it:

- MTV Music Generator 2 is out on Platinum

Graphics

08

Sound

09

Gameplay

08

Life span

07

Endless fun. Perfect music creation for dance music obsessives.

08

PlayStation 2 NERDICT



It's six-a-side soccer so the mechanics aren't complex.

The Lego characters are an excellent distraction.

Some post-goal celebrations are entertaining.

FOOTBALL MANIA

Lego temporarily throw away the plastic for a shot at the soccer title.

Developer: Silicon Dreams
Distributor: EA
Price: \$99.95
Players: 1-4
Out: Now
Website: www.lego.com/software/footballmania
50/60Hz switching: No
Widescreen: No
Surround sound: No



We've all had hours and hours of fun with it. Made castles, spaceships, and hotrods with it. Let the dog gnaw on it, and of course, almost choked on it.

Ahhh, Lego. Part of almost every childhood memory. So how cool is it that little tackers these days get a videogame where Lego characters are brought to life in a soccer game? Kids these days have it good.

Football Mania is a kart-style version of soccer. Whilst the basic principles remain intact, there are a few modifications to make it more fun for the younger gamers. Firstly, there are no out of bounds and only six players per team. More importantly, powerup items randomly appear on the playing field during the course of the game and provide plenty of laughs. These items can turn the ball into a bomb,

teleport it off opposing players, or give players speed bursts and invincibility.

A huge assortment of different Lego characters are used and players will no doubt be able to find their favourites among the many inventive themed sets which Lego have created over the years. Surprisingly, the fields are not depicted in building block form, although they're in many zany locations.

Football Mania's graphics are disappointing, even for a game specifically targeted at the young 'uns. While colourful, a better job could have been done to sharpen the characters, add more detail to the fields, and make post-goal celebrations more exciting.

A story-based mode will offer plenty of fun for single players and multiplayer will provide hours of enjoyment. □ Derek Lee

There are various levels to play *Football Mania*.

FOOTBALL MANIA

Why we'd buy it:

- Foolproof gameplay and simple controls

Why we'd leave it:

- Too many liberties taken with real football

Graphics

05

Sound

05

Gameplay

07

Life span

07

Football Mania shows a basic concept can just be enough.

06

PlayStation 2 NERDICT

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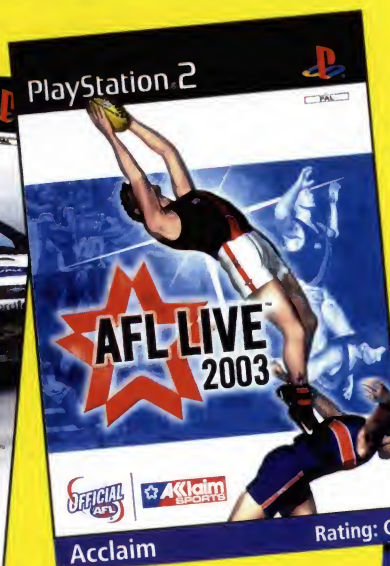
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A little known fact - Samurai's loved the 'fro.



Alcohol-related mishaps were a major problem for Samurai.



OPS2 Warning: do not try this at home.

As the great Kamahl once said, "Why are people so unkind?"

WAY OF THE SAMURAI

Save a helpless orphan or become a crony for a ruthless baron.



Developer: Acquire
Distributor: OziSoft
Players: 1-2 players
Price: \$99.95
Out Now
Website: www.acquire.co.jp
50/60Hz switching: Yes
Widescreen: No
Surround sound: No

Back story

Acquire were also responsible for *Tenchu*, a very different game in most respects to *Way of the Samurai*, which emphasised stealth over direct combat. Few games dealing with a Samurai/Ninja/Ronin theme move far beyond standard fighting gameplay elements so it's nice to see a game focusing on more than just their skills with a blade.



Way of the Samurai sees players taking on the role of a ronin. No, this doesn't mean burning around in the backstreets of Europe like Robert de Niro & Co. did in the movie of the same name. Instead of Europe in the year 2000, think Japan, circa 1878.

A ronin is a masterless samurai, one not bound to any overlord, and essentially a sword-for-hire. *Way of the Samurai* is set in a rural village and its surrounds, where two rival clans are battling for control of the area. Like many Hollywood westerns (which were actually based on earlier Japanese samurai films) a nameless warrior drifts into town. His actions and choices will determine the fate of all.

Although there is plenty of combat in *Samurai*, it's really an adventure game with RPG elements, rather than a free-roaming beat 'em-up. Players familiar with the *Bushido Blade* series will feel comfortable with the combat system, which is similar but on a simpler, cut-down scale.

While there are no one-hit kills, *Samurai* does feature stance-based combat incorporating different styles, together with a progressive moves list. There is also a parry and counter system where the emphasis is on timing. A sword strength gauge and weapon breakage feature mean defence-oriented players must be careful. Overall, the combat system is balanced but is let down by poor camera work where characters are often obscured. The result is the occasional sword in the guts for no real reason.

Success in *Samurai* isn't gauged by how many foes a player defeats, nor by reaching the end of the game. The open-ended and multi-branching storyline in *Samurai* (its strongest asset) means that players are given complete freedom when making decisions, and effectively take destiny into their own hands; there are no right or wrong choices.

As a wandering ronin, players are not strictly governed by the Bushido code (which values honour above life) and are free to make choices as they see fit. For less scrupulous players a totally selfish path can be chosen. Players can ally themselves with different factions and choose whether to spare the life of a foe, or beg for their own life when the chips are down. The result is several game endings and new encounters and scenarios on repeated plays.

Interaction with characters is accomplished via a series of dialogue boxes. Rather than using voiceovers, everything is text driven. The problem is that the text is inconsistent and doesn't mesh.

There is plenty of suitably sombre music, particularly when events take a dramatic turn. Whenever combat takes place, some customary un-Japanese sounding rock tunes kick into gear. It makes combat reminiscent of an action flick. Regardless, the combat music is repetitious.

Samurai has excellent backgrounds but also grainy textures. Animations are fluid with many moves. Most, are grisly and come accompanied with plenty of tomato sauce. □ Derek Lee



GOT MY BIT OF STEEL

Apart from "unlocking" all of the encounters in the game, players will also be driven to find the many different swords on offer in *Samurai*. Each has its own distinctive characteristics, strengths and weaknesses and ones will be better suited to a particular combat style than others. It all adds to the overall variety in gameplay. Players can also hire the village blacksmith to upgrade an existing sword and then turn around and shaft him by refusing to pay. One warning though: as usual in *Samurai*, every decision has its consequences.

WAY OF THE SAMURAI

Why we'd buy it:
- Multiple endings and new encounters on each play through
- Multi-dimensional samurai game

Why we'd leave it:
- Fixed save points
- Limited two-player mode
- Frustrating camera issues

An intriguing, versatile title that surprises with its depth and replay value. Honours to your house, Acquire.

Graphics	Smooth combat. Some camera issues	07
Sound	Repetitive in-game music. No voice samples	05
Gameplay	Solid mix of different elements that works well	08
Life span	Multi-path storyline adds replayability	08



PlayStation 2 VERDICT



Watch these two, they'll be at Athens 2004!



A simple game, but provides for excellent fun.



It's cute - older gamers may prefer to wait for DOA Volleyball.



KLONOA BEACH VOLLEYBALL

Beach volleyball with no bikinis or Speedos in sight?

Publisher: Sony
Developer: Namco
Price: \$29.95
Players: 1-2
Out: Now
Website:
<http://www.namco.co.jp/home/cs/lineup/kloweb/index.html>
60Hz Mode: No
Widescreen: No
Surround Sound: No

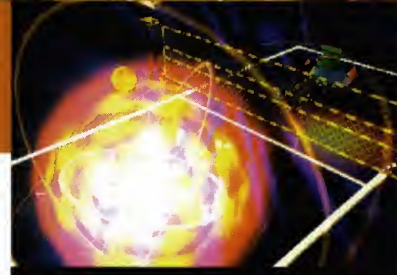


Volleyball games seem to be undergoing a slight resurgence at the moment. It's likely due to the fact that the concept of the party game has come into being in the last few years, and videogame volleyball with its simple rules and gameplay can be picked up and played by anyone. But unlike the *Dead or Alive* beach volleyball game coming to PS2, *KBV* keeps things cute and simple, and it works.

KBV plays a simple two-on-two style of volleyball complete with floaty ball physics that forces players to go for the faster spikes if they want to attack successfully. Apart from the spikes and blocks which make up the advanced techniques of most volleyball games, *KBV* also features a tic-tac-toe graph in the corner of both players' halves,

highlighting the eight positions of the opponent's area. Every time a winner is scored, you'll receive a marker indicating where you scored it in your opponent's half. Connect one of more lines together, ala tic-tac-toe and you can unleash a Super Shot, which if unreturned, will garner you bonus points. It's a fun idea and makes for great build up if players can secure a few lines.

The computer AI is not outstanding. With some practice, any decent player will adequately master the art of blocking and spiking that can trounce an AI opponent in minutes. The real appeal in this title comes in a multiplayer session complete with sledging. It's good fun, to be sure, but whether there is enough depth really depends on how often you're surrounded by 'gaming' friends. **James Ellis**



You get to unleash 'Super Shots' at times.

KLONOA BEACH VOLLEYBALL

Why we'd buy it:
- Plays a solid, simple game of volleyball

Why we'd leave it:
- There's not much to it, really

Graphics 07
Sound 06
Gameplay 07
Life span 07

Solid and simple fun for undemanding gamers. Cool multiplayer.

07

PlayStation 2 NERDICT



Hilarious two-player battles are still the highlight of the affair.



Pretty much the same premise as those already available.



Cute. *SBAMA* remains a great kid's puzzler.

SUPER BUST A MOVE AGAIN

Moo, moo. The cash cows are a grazin'.

Publisher: Ubi Soft
Developer: Taito
Price: \$89.95
Players: 1-2
Website:
<http://www.taito.co.jp/d3/cp/spb2/index.html>
60Hz Mode: No
Widescreen: No
Surround Sound: No



I don't think it's a stretch to state that the *Bust a Move* series is a major iconoclast of modern gaming. Despite all the new editions and releases since its original release back in 1993 it's remained much the same, a savvy puzzler that has players firing coloured balls in a bid to link the same together and clear the stage. As well as being able to tackle each puzzle on your own, players can go head-to-head in a bid to amass the highest score and stay alive the longest.

There's a handful of new features, and this time players can choose from twelve characters with each having ten different levels to puzzle through. The aim is to conquer a notorious Tower located in the mystical Puzzle World. Players can also create their own levels and save them to memory card.

While enjoyable, the new additions are a long way short of enticing gamers who already own any version of *Bust a Move*. It's just far too similar to past editions already released.

In addition to that it seems that one of the better modes in the game hasn't been expanded on enough in this edition - that being the multiplayer battle mode. Two-player is fine and dandy but with a series this old it's screaming for a four-player mode to be implemented. All up though, *Super Bust a Move Again* is still a fun puzzler worth checking out if you don't own any of the original versions. The minor changes though, mean you might just want to check out any of the undoubtedly cheaper originals as, apart from some lower resolutions, there's hardly any real difference between them. **James Ellis**

SUPER BUST A MOVE AGAIN

Why we'd buy it:
- Solid and addictive puzzler

Why we'd leave it:
- We already own the PSOne original

Graphics 04
Sound 03
Gameplay 08
Life span 08

Fantastic but outdated puzzler that needs some innovation.

06

PlayStation 2 NERDICT

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△○×□		www.stuartlittle2thegame.com	
 PlayStation			
			
DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF PLAYSTATION			



GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY

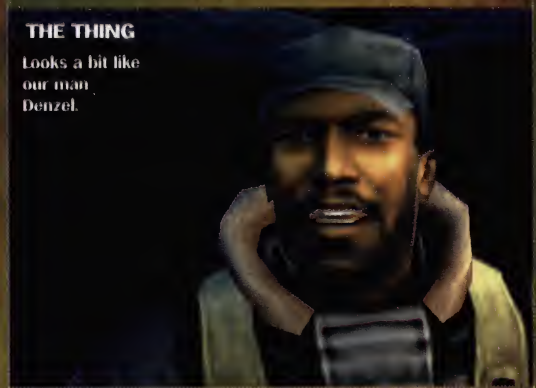
OPS2 WILL HAVE AUSTRALIA'S VERY FIRST REVIEW OF GTA: VICE CITY IN THE NOVEMBER ISSUE. BE SURE TO READ UP, AS WE REVEAL MORE ON THE GAME'S PLOT AND HIDDEN SECRETS...

NEXT MONTH IN
OFFICIAL
AUSTRALIAN
PLAYSTATION
MAGAZINE

- ++ MURDER, MAYHEM, MULTIPLAYER MADNESS - IT HAS TO BE TIMESPLITTERS 2! READ OUR EXCLUSIVE REVIEW ON FREE RADICAL'S BRAND NEW GEM.
- ++ CHECK OUT OUR FIRST PROPER HANDS-ON OPINIONS OF THE PRIMAL AND RATCHET & CLANK, KINGDOM HEARTS AND APE ESCAPE 2.
- ++ OPS2 GETS HANDS-ON WITH TOM CLANCY'S FIRST PS2 FORAY IN THE SUM OF ALL FEARS!
- ++ THE SEARCH FOR AUSTRALIA'S BEST GAMER CONTINUES! MAKE SURE YOU GET THE NEXT ISSUE OF OPS2 FOR YOUR OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM.
- ++ HUNTING DINOSAURS? CHECK OUT OUR REVIEW OF ACCLAIM'S TUROK EVOLUTION. WE'VE GOT IT FIRMLY IN OUR SIGHTS.
- ++ HIDDEN TREASURES, REVISIT PAST GLORIES, OR DISCOVER NEW ONES, IN THIS SECRET-CRACKING GUIDE TO EXTRAS TUCKED AWAY INSIDE YOUR PS2 GAME COLLECTION
- ++ OPS2 REVIEWS THE LATEST TONY HAWK INCARNATION TO BE GRANTED LIFE ON THE GLORIOUS BLACK BOX. ROLL ON!
- ++ PLUS: UBI SOFT'S XIII/ SILENT HILL 3/ SUMMONER 2/ GT CONCEPT TIPS/ HAVEN/ PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 2/ FIFA 2003/ THE LORD OF THE RINGS/ FORMULA ONE 2002/ HARRY POTTER// DVD MOVIE REVIEWS/ MORE
- ++ ALSO REVIEWED:
THE THING
LEGEND OF EXCALIBUR
FERRARI F355 CHALLENGE
FIREBUGS
MARVEL VS CAPCOM
BURNOUT 2
DIGIMON WORLD 2003
THIS IS FOOTBALL 2003
ULTIMATE FIGHTING CHAMPIONSHIP
BLADE II
STREET HOOPS + MORE!
- ++ AND OPS2'S EXCLUSIVE DVD DISC FEATURING PLAYABLE TEKKEN 4, RATCHET & CLANK, BURNOUT 2, SUMMONER 2 AND RED FACTION III! AVAILABLE ONLY ON THE NEXT ISSUE! MAKE SURE YOU PLAY OUR DEMOS BEFORE SPRINGING FOR FULL VERSIONS!
- ++ OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE: NOVEMBER ISSUE 08 ON SALE: 23 OCTOBER

THE THING

Looks a bit like our man Denzel.



GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY

Even more sex, drugs 'n' disco...



TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4

More moves than ever before.



BURNOUT 2

Almost as insane as your mother-in-law.



Edited by: Richie Young

media

DVD / MUSIC / REVIEWS

When you're done playing, here's what you might like to watch, read and listen to...

Text: Lee Hart/Tristan Ogilvie/James Michael

MONSTERS, INC. (COLLECTOR'S EDITION) DISNEY: SEPTEMBER 30

Film: Few filmmaking teams can boast such a successful record as Pixar, who had a run of hits with *Toy Story*, *A Bug's Life* and *Toy Story 2*. Anyone who was expecting their latest feature *Monsters, Inc.* to fall will be disappointed: Pixar have done it again.

Monsters, Inc. plays on the fears that we all experience when we're kids – that monsters are lurking in the wardrobe and under our beds to scare/kidnap/eat us when the lights go out. But Pixar films are never predictable; and in *Monsters, Inc.* we find out that the bogeymen in question; Sulley (John Goodman) and Mike (Billy Crystal), are more frightened of their targets than the kids are of them.

Sumptuous design, spot-on character work and a quality script make *Monsters, Inc.* a thoroughly enjoyable experience. It might not be quite the film *Toy Story 2* was – there are odd moments that let the pace slacken, but nonetheless its entertainment value is monster sized compared to 99 per cent of what is produced for kids these days. **TO**

Features: A heap of special features too large to hide under your bed. The first disc features an excellent commentary track, which gives you an insight as to how the various feats of animation were achieved.

The second disc is composed entirely of extras, including a tour of the Pixar studios, several making of documentaries, outtakes, short films and lots more. Particularly interesting is the 'Monsters only' section of the disc, where you can take a virtual tour of the greatest scream production facility in Monstropolis (the capital city of the monster world from the movie). There's plenty of other stuff included that rounds out the whole affair. One of *OPS2's* faves is the 'Monster File' where Pixar give an insight on their idea philosophy.

Verdict: One of the best kids' films that adults will get just as much enjoyment out of as the ankle-biters. And a second disc that deserves the name 'Special Features'. You really need to get it. **9/10**



Little Sammy's
first party
experience was a
hazy affair...



Now, this guy has us convinced. There's no doubt about it. He sure is a Hustler.

THE HUSTLER

FOX :: OUT NOW

Film: This all-time great pool hall melodrama stars Paul Newman as 'Fast Eddie' Felson, an up-and-coming pool hustler with huge talent and self-destructive bravado to match. After narrowly losing a marathon high stakes match against the legendary Minnesota Fats (Jackie Gleason), Eddie is determined to prove himself the best player in the country, but finds himself torn between the contrasting influences of cutthroat manager George C. Scott and alcoholic girlfriend Piper Laurie. You know the pool shark down at your local? He's a complete mug compared to this guy! **LH**

Features: "The Inside Story" is a

fascinating documentary on the making of the movie and the history of the sport itself. There's a great commentary assembled from interviews with Newman, *Time* magazine critic, Richard Schickel, and various members of the crew. We also get analysis of the pool scenes with world champion trick shot artist Mike Massey plus a stills gallery.

Verdict: Classic hard-boiled combination of film noir and sports movie with a never better Paul Newman. One thing though - once you've finished up watching this flick, you'll want to head straight down to the pub. An excellent movie from yesteryear. **9/10**

Cool name. Dodgy movie. Too bad!



KISS OF THE DRAGON

FOX :: OUT NOW

Film: While Jackie Chan clobbers his way through sequels to his smash hits *Rush Hour* and *Shanghai Noon*, fellow chopsocky legend Jet Li is still battling to make his mark on Western cinema. Following disappointments such as *Romeo Must Die* and *The One*, *Kiss of the Dragon* is easily Li's best Hollywood movie to date. Sadly, it doesn't begin to approach the standard of his ferocious Hong Kong kung fu classics.

On that front, Jet Li fans won't be disappointed but it is obvious that *Kiss of the Dragon* is far from being his finest hour.

Arriving in Paris to help the vice squad apprehend a Chinese drug lord, cop Lui Juan (Jet Li) immediately finds himself

framed for murder and fighting to clear his name with only his fists and a call girl (Bridget Fonda) to help. The movie opens with a superb action sequence in a hotel, where Li takes on the French police using everything from pool balls to laundry irons as weapons, before making his escape. Sadly, that's when the by-the-numbers plot kicks in and the film heads rapidly downhill. That's very rapidly. **LH**

Features: Five featurettes include portraits of Li and fight choreographer Cory Yuen, as well as analysis of the film's big action set-pieces. Plus, there's a group commentary.

Verdict: A decent Jet Li thriller that fails to fully capitalise on his fighting talents. **6/10**



"I've told you before, I don't think smelly farts are funny."

THE HEIST

WARNER :: OUT NOW

Film: When director David Mamet is at the helm of a film you can usually expect that no matter how dumb the casting, or how clichéd the premise, you're still in for an entertaining film. However, even Shakespeare had his off days. *Heist* is not one of Mamet's best - which probably explains why it's being sneaked out on DVD now.

Gene Hackman appears to be just going through the motions, and Danny DeVito is laughable in his role as a macho man. Besides, you've seen this kind of double-cross robbery caper before; you really don't need to see it again.

Even Warner doesn't seem to want to

waste its time on this disc, you won't find any commentary from David Mamet, or anyone for that matter. The lack of any 'behind the scenes' featurettes gives you very little insight into the making of the film, but few would be interested anyway.

TO & JM

Features: A Danny DeVito sized list of features; a theatrical trailer and some cast and crew bios. Memo to Warner: cast and crew bios a special feature does not make.

Verdict: The biggest heist here is performed by the cashier who takes your money. The soundtrack on the other hand, is at least worth a listen. After a new DVD to buy? Bypass this one. **5/10**

He'll soon break into 'The Greatest Song in the World.'



SHALLOW HAL

20TH CENTURY FOX :: OUT NOW

Film: In *Shallow Hal*, Jack Black plays the role of the leading man Hal; and Gwyneth Paltrow plays the sweet-hearted but big-boned love interest Rosemary. It may seem like a couple of odd casting choices; but then again this is a film by gross-out gurus Bobby and Peter Farrelly.

Hal Larsen is a shallow plump guy who is only interested in very beautiful women. However, after a chance meeting with 'self-help' king Tony Robbins, Hal becomes hypnotised into only seeing the inner beauty of women, or in this case the gorgeous Rosemary (minus the Volkswagen sized fat suit).

Sadly, the moral of the film contradicts

itself; if it's not important what you look like and inner beauty is the only thing that counts, then why does the aesthetically pleasing Paltrow represent it?

Jason Alexander steals the show as Hal's best friend Mauricio in what is a funny but not outstanding comedy. **TO**

Features: A fairly decent array of extras, including an entertaining commentary from the brothers Farrelly, eleven deleted scenes from the movie, three featurettes, a HBO 'behind-the-scenes' documentary, a music video and theatrical trailer.

Verdict: A comedy that tries to have a heart but is unconvincing in getting its message across. **7/10**



Your mate's Girlie bike
15mph (minus Stabilisers)



Your Dad's old rust bucket:
75mph (downhill)



Your Formula One racing car:
200mph (EASY!)



ΔΟΧ

www.au.playstation.com

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THE POWER OF PLAYSTATION

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postal

This month includes: game buying advice and more *Final Fantasy* than you can poke a stick at.

THE LETTERS ARE FLOODING IN NOW SO KEEP THEM COMING! IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO ASK OR SAY, WRITE TO US AT OPS2@DERWENTHOWARD.COM.AU OR SEND SNAIL MAIL TO OPS2, DERWENT HOWARD PTY. LTD, PO BOX 1037, BONDI JUNCTION, NSW 1355. THE WINNER OF THE STAR LETTER EACH ISSUE GETS A GAME - A GOOD GAME - OF OUR CHOOSING. JUST REMEMBER, WE WANT INTELLIGENT, INFORMED LETTERS AND COMMENTS PLEASE. NO FLAMING, NO 'MY CONSOLE'S BETTER THAN YOURS' STUFF, NO 'WHEN IS GAME XXX OUT?' ETC. AND FOR MERCY'S SAKE, USE THE SPELLCHECKER IF YOU SEND YOUR LETTER BY EMAIL - THEN WE MIGHT, TOO. WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO TRUNCATE, HACK AND SLASH YOUR LETTER SEEMINGLY AT RANDOM.



STAR LETTER

I have recently bought *Final Fantasy X* and everything was going along smoothly. It's like this basically - buy the game, then play it for a long period of time because you're so psyched to have it. I played it a lot in the first four days of purchasing and surprisingly the gameplay only lasts for 42 hours, which was how long it took me. What's going on? *FF VII*, *VIII* and *IX* were all over the 50 hour mark for me. *FFV III* was 80 hours with training and getting everything! Also, I'm trying not to spoil this for people who haven't finished the game but the final boss is well... wimpy. I was very unhappy with the way the last boss and the last FMV turned out. The cost of the game was \$110 for me and with such a small number of gameplay hours and a pathetic last boss and ending movie, I'm really disappointed. For some reason though, I still make myself believe, and am ready to

overlook it, due to the fact that its *FF X I* mean I'd been waiting for this game for months! Other than that everything was good.
Matt, via email

*Maybe all that practise on the earlier games has just made you a better gamer? All the same, OPS2 congratulates you! Finishing a monster (whether it be 42 hours or 80+ hours) is no mean feat and we know of plenty who've (almost) died trying. We'd like to hear from other readers about their 'final fantasies', and whether they agree with Matt here, that Square's effort in *FFX* isn't quite up to scratch with their earlier games. And remember to keep your eyes on the post, Matt. A copy of Codemasters' excellent V8 Supercar Race Driver is coming your way and be sure to let us know as soon as you become the new 'King of the Mountain'. Who said playing games doesn't pay?*

FULL O' QUESTIONS

Love the mag. I have some questions for you to answer though!

1. What subjects will I need to take get into videogame making?
2. Do you have any cheats for *MGS 2* that dose not involve getting all the dog tags?
3. Will there be a *Lord of the Rings* game made for the PS2?

Lachlan Scott, via email

Thanks for dropping us a line! OK, we'll get straight into it. If you want to get into the art and design side of things, we'd suggest practising your art as well as learning computer-aided designs (CAD) programs. Programmers need to have a foundation in mathematics, and both areas are well covered at universities across the country. Keep your eyes peeled on the Official PlayStation Tips Magazine that we'll be bringing out in coming months. It'll be packed with all the cheats and walkthrough help that you'll need. If you're stuck, we'll sort you out!

No, there won't be a LOTR game. There'll be two! One will focus primarily on the book, and the other will be based on the movie.

LIFE IN LIBERTY CITY

*Just finished reading the September issue and thought I'd share my thoughts with you on *GTA III*. This is the game I have been waiting for since I got my first 'Game &*

Watch' back in the early 80's. I was able to score one of the last unopened copies sold before the ban and am still playing this game at least twice a week.

Every time I play I try to approach the missions differently and have just this morning found a fun way to complete one of the earlier missions in the game. 'The Fuzz Ball' (where you pick up Luigi's girls and taking them to the annual Policemen's Ball) is a race against time. Indeed it is quite hard to deliver all the girls in time but I have found a way that is quite easy and a lot of fun. Before starting the mission go to the bus depot (near Joey's) and steal a bus. You can now pick up all the girls in one go and deliver them to the ball with plenty of time.

Anyway, no more ramblings from me, so I'll leave you to it.

Rocket, via email

*Keep 'em coming guys. We hope you like the *GTA Vice City* feature in this very issue.*

GAME HUNGRY

I just checked out the July edition of your magazine (again!) and I was amazed. On page 18 there seems to be a spelling mistake. It says 'Take a wise songwriter note: while it takes different strokes to rule the world'. I can say that I have not heard that expression before and I was just wondering if you noticed. If it is a spelling mistake I am bewildered at seeing this as you are a

magazine publisher!

Also I am seeking to buy a new game for my PS2 and I was wondering what you could suggest. I already own *Metal Gear Solid 2*, *Final Fantasy X*, and *Devil My Cry*. I was thinking about *Spider-man* or *Blood Omen 2*. Do you have any thoughts or suggestions for me? I really need help here because on *MGS2* I have played it four times and am stuck on Solidus and cannot continue. I have finished *Final Fantasy IX* once and it took 54 hours and that kept me going for a while. I want a long RPG like that.

I would also like to know how people get involved in a game developing company or a game magazine like yours.

Keep up the good work OPS2

Stephen Cassel, via email

Stephen, we never make mistakes! OK, almost never! But that isn't one of them. Perhaps you haven't heard the expression before but anyone with a firm memory of the early to mid '80's will know the sitcom and themesong from Different Strokes. Only you can make an informed choice based on your gaming preferences but you wouldn't go for wrong with any of those titles that you have listed. As far as new games (and ones on the horizon) go, we'd also throw in Red Faction II, Project Zero, Burnout 2 and Colin McRae Rally 3.0 into the mix. Watchoo talkin' 'bout Willis?

MORE FANTASIES

I heard people complaining about *Final Fantasy VII* being too realistic to be a fantasy game. So if it WAS real enough, perhaps Squaresoft could make a *Final Fantasy VII* movie!

It would definitely beat the first *Final Fantasy* movie (*The Spirits Within*) because it is the perfect love story. So I've written to them (via this letter) to see what they think of my theory. So, Squaresoft - how 'bout it?

Matthew Howe, via email

*OPS2 would also love to see another *Final Fantasy* movie, but to say that we are cautious about the whole thing would be an understatement! We see that games and movies merging toward becoming one industry as being inevitable, although we must tread carefully until then. Many gamers are sick of classic videogames being turned into woeful Hollywood efforts for the sake of cashing in at the box office. Aren't you sick of all of your favourite games being converted into trashy Hollywood trape? If the movie showed even half the genius of the game, we'd be first in line.*

WASSUP HERE?

Just writing to express my concern on how f&king hard and hair tearingly painful the dodge lighting game on *FFX* is. I heard a

rumour that you could get something called 'no encounter' and this item would help you out. I need anything to get the sigil. I've finished the game once and now I want to finish the game 100 hundred per cent. Please help! Also, could you give your top five of the moment as I am thinking of purchasing a new game? Give me some goss about the new *GTA* instalment. Until next time, keep pumping out the good shit concerning PlayStation 2.

Aaron Roots, via email

Now, haven't you just wandered into the right Postal page?

*We reckon that you should drop Matt (Star Letter) a line. We're certain he'd be more than obliging in helping you get out of the *Final Fantasy* pickle that you've worked yourself into.*

As far as our Top Five goes, the catalogue of PlayStation 2 games out there now is to huge to narrow down to just five! Our monthly reviews and playable demo discs are your best bet and the most succinct way to help inform you about your next game purchase. Too easy!

BOXED IN

Good job on the magazine and the DVD demo that comes with it. I have been buying this magazine since mid last year - around the same time I got my PS2. I want to tell you about my theory on the Xbox.

This may sound crazy and sort of stupid but it changes the behaviour of whoever buys and plays one. A kid I knew at school bought one and he was an alright guy but now he has changed into a complete ass.

This is not the only case. Another kid bought one and even though he was an ass before, he turned into a bigger ass. If you said anything about Xbox he would go into a fit of rage and start throwing a hissy fit. But that's not the strangest thing! These people completely hated each other before they both got their hands on the thing but now they're best friends but have rejected their original friends and hate anybody with a PS2. And I mean HATE. It's like they've been bred to hate PS2 owners. It doesn't happen to people with multiple consoles though, I know that. This may sound like I'm complaining about Xbox but it's true! I mean I get along with people who have Game Cube and DC and a PC and any other console or handheld. I try to get along with Xbox owners but they don't talk to me unless it is to make fun at me for having a PS2.

Concerned, via email.

Yep, it does sound crazy but it's not sort of stupid. We'd change that to VERY stupid! Anyway, love does blossom in strange places... the best of luck to you all and happy gamin!

SPIDER-MAN

Are you getting licked by the Green Goblin and struggling to find those secret attack moves and hidden areas? If so, get into full swing with our definitive guide that exposes all of the above and plenty more besides!

STRANGE, BUT TRUE!

A smattering of unusual occurrences to look out for while you're obliterating killbots and web-slinging your way into Mary Jane's heart.

■ If you're using the Alex Ross skin, play any level with the Green Goblin in it and you'll notice he wears a different costume.

■ On any level in which you have to swing through the city, use your height meter to swing down to the lowest point you can go. Cruise at that height for about ten seconds and you'll hear people down on the streets talking about you.

■ In Pinhead Bowling, Bruce Campbell can be heard saying various things. One quote – "Jesus Quintanna, your lane is ready" – is a reference to the acclaimed Coen brothers' comedy *The Big Lebowski*.

■ Turn around in Pinhead Bowling and you'll see pictures of the development team stuck to the wall, as well as fake movie posters on the side walls.

■ Fancy a bit of Sapphic action? Simply enter the cheat code to play as Mary Jane, then complete the game and watch the ending sequence. That's right, it shows you (as Mary Jane) kissing the real Mary Jane! Boys, boys, boys...

■ At the start of the game, when you have to take pictures of yourself, get on top of any tall building and look up into the sky in the general direction of the 'Activision' building. The words 'CHAOS' can be seen written in the clouds.

GENERAL TIPS

Choice little nuggets to help you live longer (the unscrupulous way).

■ Run through Training mode before you do anything else. The controls are quite complex to master and the comprehensive training levels ease you into Spidey's abilities and show you how best to exploit them.

■ Use the Enhanced control set-up at all times. It may seem awkward at first, but once you master it you'll find it infinitely more effective when the going gets tough, as it often does.

■ Whenever you learn a new combo, be sure to use it. Advanced fighting techniques are rewarded when the scores are dished out at the end of the level. Don't over-use it, though, because this will have an adverse effect.

■ When swinging over large, open terrain, you can adjust the level of your swing by pressing **↑** or **↓**. Also, if you need to drop down in a hurry – to reach a lower skyscraper, for example, or avoid attack – simply break your web and fall to the desired height before resuming your swing.

■ Always study the opening FMV for each level. This often provides clues on how to locate secret areas and key power-ups.

■ Reduce your workload with stealth! Avoid being seen and you won't have to fight so much. An icon in the upper-left corner of the screen indicates whether you're hidden in a shadow, skulking in a half-shadow or clearly visible in broad daylight. If you're fully in shadow, no-one can see you.

■ When fighting aerial bosses, be sure to set the camera function on Camera Lock. This keeps your target on-screen with you at all times and also makes aiming your webbing a damn sight easier. Also, be sure to use the camera centring function (press **↓** on the right stick) to swing the camera back behind Spidey's head, as it's easy to get disorientated – especially on those indoor levels.

MASTER THE WEB, MASTER THE GAME!

As much of what you do in the game revolves around the cunning use of Spider-Man's highly durable webbing, there are several key factors to consider when taking to the city streets for the first time...

Web-slinging

In order to swing faster when gliding over that sprawling cityscape, press and hold **Ⓢ**. Although this makes you less manoeuvrable, it's ideal for covering great distances quickly, provided you have a relatively straight path. If you swing into a building, you'll automatically cling onto it. But if you aren't holding **Ⓢ**, you can quickly continue your swinging pattern by pressing the direction away from the building before impact to roll off it. Simply press **ⓧ** (jump) to break the line, change direction and then press **Ⓢ** to resume swinging.

Web Zipping

This is your essential tool for evading danger – and a damn handy one at that. If you perform a Web Zip (**Ⓢ**) without pressing a direction on the stick, you'll zoom straight up to the ceiling – which is great for avoiding detection by patrolling guards. For more accurate Zips, use the R3 button to enter Look Around Mode, place the spider-scope icon to the exact point you wish to go and then press **Ⓢ**.

Andrew-Lloyd Webber

Master the following web skills and you'll become the undisputed king of New York (see *Fight The Power* for more great combat moves):

1. Web Yank (**Ⓢ** + **ⓧ**) to latch on to a targeted object and then yank it off the wall or ground.
2. Impact Webbing (**Ⓢ** + **Ⓢ**) to send a ball of webbing toward a target – a great long-range attack in boss encounters).
3. Web Dome (**Ⓢ** + **Ⓢ**) to encase Spidey in a temporary shell of webbing, from which he bursts out, injuring anyone standing nearby.

THE WALKTHROUGH SEARCH FOR JUSTICE

Combat Move: Field Goal

You start the level on a gargoyle – underneath which is hidden a COMBAT MOVE (Field Goal). To reach it, swing forwards, then jump and turn around, and swing back in underneath. Follow your spider compass to the first group of thugs – straight ahead and slightly below the starting point – then drop down onto the roof and pummel them into submission. Once you've nailed the two thugs, move on to the next rooftop indicated by the compass. After three thug-filled rooftop battles, you'll proceed to the last, which is considerably lower than the others. Once you've defeated the two villains here, watch the cut-scene. Move on to the blue spider icon to finish the level.

SECRET SUB-MISSION

At the start of the level, swing to the left slightly. You should go over a building with a helipad. Go down to the next building that has a billboard and you'll find two Skulls on the rooftop – and a purse. Spidey will notice this once you've defeated the two scoundrels. Now turn towards the billboard, go back over the roof with the helipad, and start to go right to the next rooftop. There are two Skulls and a woman here. Beat up the Skulls and chat to her. She'll say she's lost... guess what? Go back to the building with the aforementioned fashion accessory and bring it back to her. Completing this task awards you extra points!

WAREHOUSE HUNT

Combat Move: Back-Flip Kick

Move over to the door and it opens automatically, revealing a stairwell. Grab the COMBAT MOVE (Back-Flip Kick) and follow the stairs down until you reach an open doorway. Go through and immediately zip up to the ceiling to avoid the bad guys. There's a door on the opposite side of the warehouse – if you can drop and sneak through it without being seen, your stealth rating will be intact. If you don't, then you have one hell of a fight on your hands. If you're forced into battle, be sure to mix up your attacks and tie the gun-toting thugs in webbing before smacking them down. Also, take advantage of the various objects scattered around.

Once you've disposed of the thugs, proceed to the next part of the room and go over to the large question mark situated near a stack of crates. Search the crates and you should find an opening on the upper-right corner that'll take you through to a SECRET AREA. There isn't much inside, apart from a health icon, but at least you get points for finding it.

When you exit this area, the door to your right opens and a cut-scene unfolds. Dispose of the thugs and head over to the truck, then cling to the wall above it and head through the opening. Stick close to the ceiling to get to the opening opposite and watch the forklift crash – bet you're glad you stuck to the roof now, eh?

In a nook at the far end of the hall is a question mark. Stand on the square near to the vent and zip up into it. Follow this passage until you run into some electricity. At this point, take a left and follow the vent until it drops into a room. Step on the question mark here to learn about the nearby control panel, then go to the console and press **Ⓢ** to switch off the electric current.

Zip back up into the vent – the electricity no longer blocks your way – and drop into the room at the end. Here

you'll find a control panel that's missing a fuse. Step through the nearby door, tackle the thugs and then go through the door on the left to meet a couple more. Crawl into the broken vent on the wall and then deactivate the switch in the room it takes you to. Crawl back through the pipe, return to the previous room and find the vent.

When you drop into the next room, you'll have to take out a gun-toting thug before you can open the door. Now go back to the control panel and press **Ⓢ** to use the fuse – which will open a door near the truck.

Return to the truck area and go through the door. Take out the thugs inside and then approach the door at the far end to complete the level.

BIRTH OF A HERO

Combat Moves: Advanced Web Dome, Handspring

Zip up into the ceiling vent and move through the tunnel until you reach a dead end. Zip up into the next tunnel and you'll see three separate openings into a large room below. Stick to the side of the vent and crawl out – remember to cling to the ceiling to avoid the gaggle of goons below. Now either continue the stealth approach or take them on using the barrels and office furniture nearby. If you can get through this room undetected and exit through the doorway to the left of the question mark room, you can score a COMBAT MOVE (Advanced Web Dome).

There are two doorways here. Go through one to find a question mark that explains the handy Look Around Mode, and then proceed through the next. Aim your Look Around cursor at the opposite wall and zip over to it. Now follow the path and take the COMBAT MOVE (Handspring) into another large warehouse room and zip up to the ceiling.

Warning! This room is crawling with enemies, but fortunately the walkway ahead provides a stack of power-ups that will replenish your battle-scarred body. Focus on the thug in the green jacket, as he has two guns. When you take out the last thug, you'll get a key. Take it to the door with the rotating red light above it and go through. Move forward to the staircase and use your zip line to cling to the underside of the stairs, which will put you above the level of the steam vent. Crawl past each vent, then zip up to the next level. Once you're past all of the steam vents, follow the path up to the first boss encounter.

BOSS: UNCLE BEN'S KILLER

This guy packs a shotgun and several stun grenades, so your best bet is to attack from above. Bide your time on the ceiling or on top of the crates, then descend and attack when he's vulnerable. If he raises his gun or pulls out a grenade, zip up to the ceiling, then zip-line around on the rafters so you're hard to hit. The key is to be patient and use all your combo attacks to devastating effect. If you get into trouble, then there are health and web icons among the beams.

OSCORP'S GAMBIT

Combat Move: None

This level kicks off with a series of challenges to help you master the control system... The first thing to do is practise hard swinging. Once that's done, break your line and swing in another direction before taking a picture of yourself. Afterwards, follow your radar to the balloon. Lock on to it with the Camera Lock button and swing past to take another picture. The

last picture you have to take is of you shooting the balloon with webbing. Use the Camera Lock to find the balloon again, then swing towards it and tap **Ⓢ** to snap the third picture.

Follow the compass to a blue spider, grab the webbing and a cut-scene plays as you leave. When it concludes, you're surrounded by killbots. Lock on to the closest and begin the fight. This is your first real aerial battle, so remember the following: always Lock on to a target before belting it out of the sky using webbing or Impact Webbing. Another good tactic is to get above your opponent and then break your line, dropping down on top of him and unleashing a flurry of blows before he has time to react. You can also avoid the projectile attacks by adjusting the length of your web line.

THE SUBWAY STATION

Combat Move: Scissor Kick

Save the security guard from the thugs but, before you eliminate the last one, head to the opposite end of the terminal and search the side halls to find a COMBAT MOVE (Scissor Kick). Now go back and defeat the wretch. Once you've battered the bad guy, the security guard will run off.

Watch the ensuing FMV and you'll get an insight into where you must go to rescue the next batch of civilians. Follow the compass to a series of conference rooms and save the businessman first (he's in a small room to the right) as he's the weakest of the bunch. In this same room, you'll find a health icon. Now head out and save another security guard in the larger conference room. Once you've saved them, you'll see more trouble in the main station room. Follow the compass to find two thugs beating up another hapless security guard. Another cut-scene plays, this time showing Shocker weakening the room's columns.

When the cut-scene concludes, follow the compass to the beleaguered businessman, walk up to him and press **Ⓢ** to pick him up. Take him over to the red spider symbol on the floor (use the compass if you have to) to save him, and activate another cut-scene. Afterwards, take out the thugs.

You'll now see a pair of guards in trouble in passages at the other end of the terminal. Get over there and head through the barred, metal doors that are now open. Follow the passage until you find the two guards, then defeat their tormentors to finish the level.

CHASE THROUGH THE SEWER

Combat Moves: Advanced Web Gloves, Dive-Bomb

If you fancy a whopping points bonus, remember to defeat all the thugs on this level. You'll encounter two guys as soon as you start, so take them down and continue along the path. You'll emerge in a room that's locked in two places. Grab the key from the Uzi-toting thug, then go through the door with the flashing red light above it. In the next passage, you're confronted by a heavy torrent of sewage water. Cling to the wall on your left, then creep along the wall and drop into the area to the left. There's another Uzi-toting villain here and also a health icon. Once you've nailed the reprobate, use your web to swing across the water.

At the crossroads ahead, two bad guys appear. Follow the long path to the left into a circular room with a walkway in the middle. Drop into the shaft, then swing over to the walkway that circles the room, two-thirds of the way down. Take out the two thugs and flip the two

FULL WALKTHROUGH

switches on this walkway (by pressing **Ⓢ**) to open the door at the bottom.

Go through the new door and then zip across the water flow to the opposite wall. Crawl away from the dead end, making your way to an opening on the right. You'll emerge in a large, multi-tiered room with a large pipe at one end. As you step in the room, someone turns the water on – your aim now is to shut it off. Grab the COMBAT MOVE (Dive-Bomb) on top of the pipe, then defeat all the thugs here. Head to the opposite side of the room to find a maze-like chamber with several thugs inside. You'll see a thug holding the pipe valve – pummel him to get your hands on it, then take it back to the main room. Put the valve on the console below the red flashing light and the water flow will cease.

Climb up and into the pipe. As you emerge, you'll be set upon by several thugs. Climb the ladder on the left wall and enter the door. There's a small control panel here, so push the switch and return to the tunnel. Move through to the previous room, drop down to the area below the pipe and head through the metal door. Inside you'll find both the SECRET AREA and a COMBAT MOVE (Advanced Web Gloves).

Return through the pipe and head via the doorway to the right. Wade through the water, then jump over the rail on the other side and continue down the path. At the end are more thugs and a webbing icon to the right. Go down the long hall and jump into the stagnant water. Proceed down the canal until a door slams shut behind you. When the cut-scene ends, you'll be surrounded by thugs. Zip up to the ceiling and deal with the assailants on the top path, otherwise they'll pick you off with gunfire. If you need more health or webbing, you'll find it in the corners of this upstairs area. As you dispose of the bad guys up high, you'll see a door open below and more thugs wading in – so fire Impact Webbing down at them. When only a few cronies remain, drop down and take them out manually. Once you've thrashed the most heavily-armoured thug, he drops a key. Now descend into the dry lower area, on the far side of the room, and head through the right door to find a control panel. Flip the switch to activate a door in the higher portion of this room. Go through this door.

SHOWDOWN WITH THE SHOCKER

Combat Move: Uppercut

When the level begins, quickly duck into the cubby hole to the right, making sure you aren't in either corridor. Back up against the end of the wall behind you and enable Look Around Mode. Zip to the next opening, diagonally to the right, then back up to the end of the wall behind you, and zip diagonally again, this time further to the left. Repeat this process all the way to the end of the corridor, where you'll meet the Shocker. He'll flee, leaving you alone in the tunnels. A pile of rubble stops you from pursuing him, so you'll have to move some stuff before you can carry on. Pull the left lever, moving the subway car, then follow the stairs up to a sewer. If you're quick, you can grab a COMBAT MOVE (Uppercut) from the water flow. Move around and follow the next set of stairs down to your final demanding meeting with the Shocker.

BOSS: THE SHOCKER

Turn on the Camera Lock to make tracking the Shocker a lot easier during the course of the battle. If you need healing, there's a health icon in the far corner on the same side of the entrance, and another stashed behind the subway car on the rails above.

Shocker delivers a particularly nasty attack, whereby he spins around

rapidly, creating a deadly cyclone which can suck you in and inflict a massive amount of damage. So if you see him initiate his spinning moves and you're nearby, jump in the air and start swinging away. The key with Shocker is to keep your distance. If you're not too fussed about points, then you can always take him down effortlessly enough using the Impact Webbing. Just dodge his attacks and reposition yourself if he gets too close.

THE VULTURE'S LAIR

Combat Move: Gravity Punch

Your aim here is to climb as quickly as possible, avoiding mines, grenades and malevolent spiders. The pathway upwards isn't always easy and there are times when you have to go down before you can make progress upwards. Also, be sure to climb up the central shaft, looking out for the holes where you can get in or out.

When you get about halfway up, Vulture will create an explosion that causes a burning log to swing wildly back and forth. Stick to the near wall and make your way to the highest point – you'll see a gap in the path here. Stand on the platform and use the Look Around mode to aim at the higher stairway across the gap. Zip over here to collect a health icon, then continue the arduous climb.

If you get stuck in this next section, try either dropping through a portion of broken staircase or climbing inside the central shaft. By doing this, you'll get a COMBAT MOVE (Gravity Punch) as well as a wealth of assorted power-ups.

Stick to the outside walls and use your zip-line to move diagonally up each wall – this way, you can zip past a lot of danger while climbing the tower in super-quick time.

THE VULTURE ESCAPES

Combat Move: None

The key is to stay close to the Vulture at all times as he weaves between the buildings. Keep track of your progress by looking at the meter in the upper right-hand corner of the screen. Dodge the green feathers he shoots and look for health and webbing power-ups on the ledges as you head between the buildings. Grab them quickly to ensure you're always on the move.

Halfway through the chase, the Vulture stops and knocks down a billboard. You now have to fix it before it hurts someone! Lock on with your camera, then land on the rooftop and use your webbing to mend the break. Once danger is averted, continue your pursuit. Eager to test you to the limit, the Vulture now flies to a water tower and breaks its supports. Use your webbing to repair the damage (making sure you get both supports), then take off and follow the boss again. Now stay on his sorry tail until the level ends.

BOSS: AIR DUEL WITH THE VULTURE

This is a frantic air battle, so use Camera Lock to keep the Vulture in your sights at all times. Your basic aim is to damage him enough (make the blue portion of his health meter disappear) to force him down for a hands-on pummeling. Be sure to avoid the green bolts of electricity he emits by lengthening and shortening your swing as required. He'll also encase himself in a forcefield and try to dive-bomb you. When this happens, just press **Ⓢ** and freefall until he passes, then resume your swing.

Shoot Impact Webbing at him to deplete his blue bar, then he'll stand on the ledge and try to attack from there instead. Move in and use combo attacks, then, when he takes to the skies again, repeat the barrage of Impact Webbing. If you get hurt or run out of webbing during this fight, there

are extra supplies on the building gargoyles the Vulture perches on, so nab 'em while you can.

CORALLED

Combat Move: Advanced Web Dome

Mechanical spiders are threatening the Scorpion – and you have to destroy all 20 of them to save him. Follow the Scorpion and stay close at all times using your compass. Use the Web Yank to rip the blighters off the walls and then pummel them with various combo attacks. The spiders attack in numerous ways. The one to seriously avoid is the fire attack. When you see fire, zip to another part of the area – fast!

Health and web icons are available in the upper reaches of the garage. If you haven't picked it up in a previous level, a COMBAT MOVE (Advanced Web Dome) is also situated between the upper floors of the level (in the curving ramp). Use a variety of attacks to take down the spiders. Impact webbing works well, and you can also pick up cars and chuck them.

THE SCORPION'S RAMPAGE

Combat Move: Tackle

The Scorpion has several modes of attack. Up close, he uses his tail to stinging effect – so double-jump to avoid it. He can also send out energy blasts; if he puts his tail in the air and green energy emits from it, turn around and swing away. If he climbs the walls, watch out for laser beams.

If you need health, you can find it in the wings. There's one on the top of the arch wall and one on the other side of the arena on a wire cage. Webbing is also available on the cylindrical container in the centre of the area and in the hall behind the arched wall. You'll find the COMBAT MOVE (Tackle) on top of a column. Keep Scorpion in sight with the Camera Lock and rush in with combo attacks whenever possible.

COUP D'ETAT

Combat Move: None

Your first encounter with the Green Goblin! Your initial aim is to rescue Mary Jane. She's situated on the huge panda that's beneath you as the level begins. Swing down and pick her up by hitting **Ⓢ**, then use the compass to find out where to go next – the closest rooftop. Put her down on the red spider symbol.

Now it's time to take down the Goblin. As with the Vulture, your aim is to whittle down the Green Goblin's blue bar until the critter has to land. The Goblin throws pumpkin bombs and sprays fire from his craft – both of which you can avoid by adjusting the height of your swing. If you see bombs heading your way, break your web and freefall before resuming your swing. Again, as with Vulture, attack the Goblin from a distance, using your Impact Webbing, or drop down from above and dish out some rough justice with your fists. Time it properly and you can land on his scooter and ride with him. Just press and hold the **Ⓢ** button while above him and you'll drop onto it – earning a massive points boost.

Beat the Goblin down until he begins to fly away, then pursue him through the city. He'll try to take down a radio tower en route, so lock on to its supports and web it down, then grab the health that's floating in the air nearby. When he says, "Let's find

some more people to play with!", take a look on the nearby rooftop – there's a webbing icon there and you can get to it by swinging low over the top of the skyscraper. Shortly afterwards, the Goblin will destroy the supports of a bridge, so land on the flat platforms below and target the break to web it down. When both are fixed, an angry Goblin will take to the skies again and you'll have to fight once more. As soon as his energy reaches a certain amount, the level ends.

THE OFFER

Combat Move: Flip Mule

The level starts with an identical battle to the last, so the same tactics apply – right down to hitching a ride on his glider for a points bonus! Once you deplete his blue bar, he'll crash through the skylight of a nearby building. Follow him in, but be sure to stock up on health and webbing beforehand – a quick scan of the area will disclose several icons on the rooftops around the building you're about to enter.

When you land inside the building, Camera Lock on the Goblin again and he'll unleash two long-range attacks: either using pumpkin bombs (which can be avoided by swinging in the opposite direction) or a dazzling bright light. The idea is that these attacks will draw you closer to him – but don't fall for it. Stay on the perimeter and blast him with Impact Webbing. If he throws pumpkins, double-jump over them and continue shooting. There's a COMBAT MOVE (Flip Mule) on the floor, which you should definitely use on the Goblin if you do get forced into close combat. Once you wear him down enough, he'll fly off yet again. Follow him and continue unleashing the Impact Webbing until he finally trails off.

RACE AGAINST TIME

Combat Move: None

Your aim here is to disarm several groups of bombs scattered around the skyscrapers – and fast! If you take too long, the bombs go off and your mission fails. To make matters worse, each bomb is heavily guarded by several killbots.

In order to solve this level, pay careful attention to the compass, because it will help you reach the next objective much more quickly. And don't waste time battling with the bots. Just get to the bombs, deactivate them (**Ⓢ** button) and get airborne as quickly as possible. You'll also need to dodge the various spotlights – if one hits you, you'll be set upon by Light Mechs.

At the start of the level, swing straight ahead and climb slightly to find the first bomb. Once it's shut off, turn right and swing toward the nearby skyscraper. There's a passage between the two halves of this building. Land on the ledge nearest this opening and collect the health that's there, then turn off the second bomb. Now swing through the opposite side of the channel.

The third bomb is quite a bit lower – follow the compass down to find it. There's a health icon

FIGHT THE POWER

Master the art of Spi-Kwon-Dol!

Starting the game with basic punch and kick attacks (punches quick, kicks slow) you can acquire additional fighting skills by finding special, cunningly concealed Golden Spiders littered throughout the levels. Below is the complete list of in-game moves, but bear in mind that you cannot perform these until you've found the appropriate Spider. [See Walkthrough for their location.]

Move	Command
Advanced Web Dome	← + Ⓢ, Ⓢ
Advanced Web Gloves	← + Ⓢ, Ⓢ
Backflip Kick	Ⓢ, Ⓢ, Ⓢ
Dive-Bomb	Ⓢ, Ⓢ, Ⓢ
Dive Kick	Ⓢ, Ⓢ, Ⓢ
Dual Fists	Ⓢ, Ⓢ, Ⓢ
Elbow Slam	Ⓢ, Ⓢ, Ⓢ
Field Goal	Ⓢ, Ⓢ, Ⓢ
Flip Mule	Ⓢ, Ⓢ, Ⓢ
Gravity Slam	Ⓢ, Ⓢ, Ⓢ
Handspring	Ⓢ, Ⓢ, Ⓢ
Haymaker	Ⓢ, Ⓢ, Ⓢ
Head Hammer	Ⓢ, Ⓢ, Ⓢ
High Stomp	Ⓢ, Ⓢ, Ⓢ
High Web Hit	Ⓢ, Ⓢ, Ⓢ
Impact Web	← + Ⓢ
Low Web Hit	Ⓢ, Ⓢ, Ⓢ
Mule Kick	Ⓢ, Ⓢ, Ⓢ
Palm	Ⓢ, Ⓢ, Ⓢ
Scissors Kick	Ⓢ, Ⓢ, Ⓢ
Sting	Ⓢ, Ⓢ, Ⓢ
Tackle	Ⓢ, Ⓢ, Ⓢ
Uppercut	Ⓢ, Ⓢ, Ⓢ
Web Dome	← + Ⓢ
Web Gloves	← + Ⓢ
Web Hit	Ⓢ, Ⓢ, Ⓢ
Web Yank	← + Ⓢ

on the rooftop nearby. As soon as you grab it, take off and follow the compass to the next bomb, which is some distance away. There are three bombs in a triangle in this area. Get the closest one first, then head to the one to the right, then the most distant one.

Don't think it's over yet though – the final bomb is situated even further afield! Follow the compass and be sure not to hit any walls. As you get close to the bomb, break your web at the top of your swing so the momentum carries you forward to the device. Now pat yourself on the back – and collapse in triumphant exhaustion!

THE RAZOR'S EDGE

Combat Move: None

There are 50 razor bats that need taking down in this level. The key to disarming them safely is to use your swing-kick attack to take out

Bored of playing as Spidey? Enter our cheat codes to play the whole game again as the Goblin!

SPIDER-MAN cont

☞ whole groups in one go. Otherwise, you can simply Lock On and use your Impact Webbing. Easy.

BREAKING AND ENTERING

Combat Move: High Stomp

This level demands stealth, so keep an eye on the shadow meter in the top-left corner of the screen to ensure you're hidden from the public eye. If you're spotted and the alarm is raised, several heavily-armed killbots will swarm around you. If this happens, hide in a darkened corner until the commotion dies down.

When the level begins, move forwards down the vent and take the first left. Push the grate aside and stick to the ceiling, then move down the hall, still on the ceiling, until you reach a door at the far end. Make sure the guard is facing the opposite way, then drop down and go through the door. The next room contains a doorway guarded by a security beam, while off to the side is a room with several lifts. Open them by pressing **Ⓢ** – you'll find extra health and web supplies inside. Return to the adjacent room and creep past the search beam into the next room. You'll come to a stairwell.

To avoid the beam, zip up to the ceiling and scurry over to the higher part of the landing, then head through the door. Zip up to the ceiling again and avoid the guard's watchful gaze while moving across. As long as you're up there, you should be safe. The area between the two cubicles contains a COMBAT MOVE (High Stomp). But before you can nab it, you need to rotate the security camera so that you can see the guard. When he's not looking, drop down and grab it before zipping straight back up again. Now head towards the cubicle in the corner and drop down to the computer screen. Access this terminal to receive a code piece, then go through the door opposite where you found the Golden Spider (if you get spotted, duck into a shadow in the corner of the room).

Zip to the ceiling, then crawl to the upstairs door before going through. Zip to the ceiling and then head to the two terminals. Get the code pieces, then go to the opposite end of the room – you'll have to crawl under a piece of wall that cuts across. Follow this wall until you see a landing (with two staircases below). Go through the door here to the last computer room and use the other two terminals. Once you've activated them, a message telling you to go to the security door is displayed.

Follow your compass to the security door without triggering any alarms and then press **Ⓢ** to access the console. Line up the circuit pieces to make one connected code. There are five pieces in all and they should flow from blue to red, from left to right. Make all the lines match to finish the level.

CHEMICAL CHAOS

Combat Move: Palm

Step through the door into the lab and immediately zip up to the ceiling. Observe your surroundings. There are health and web icons littered down the slide-paths of this first room, but you don't need them yet. Head down the central hallway. This leads directly to a door that takes you further into the lab. Make sure the guard is facing the other way before you drop down and go through. The next hallway has a laser grid, so use the web zip to focus on the angled wall in the distance and zip past before it detects you. On landing, be wary of the search beams combing this section.

In the next area, you'll have to web-zip among criss-crossing lasers – tripping these will cause the killbots to descend on you! If you do get spotted, start swinging until you reach a branch

in the path, then go left, enter the first door on the wall to the right and cling to the ceiling while the commotion outside dies down.

Drop down, access the console (Reactor B) and then exit the room and zip to the ceiling. Move to the end of the hall, wait for the guard to look away, then enter the lab. Switch on console A, then wait for a clearing before going back out into the hall and zipping up to the ceiling once again. Avoid the guard's gaze as you make your way to the large doorway between the two labs. Inside are two consoles. Head to the one on the right and press **Ⓢ** to shut down reactors A and B.

Now go back out into the corridor and zip to the ceiling. Make your way back past Lab B and head around the corner. On the ceiling is a COMBAT MOVE (Palm) so grab it and move to the area above the door. Take a peek around and drop down when the coast is clear. This next area is heavily patrolled, so position yourself on one of the cabinets in the back row and use the Look Around Mode to target a cabinet in the grid area. Zip over to it between guard shifts, then zip to the doorway in the midst of the grid.

In the next room, wait for the commotion to clear by biding your time on the ceiling, then exit through the only door available. In the next room, zip past the laser grid and follow your compass to the adjoining lab room. Trigger the switch in Lab C, then follow the compass to Lab D. This one is jammed, so you'll need to get the key from the doctor, who'll come running towards the door. Go in and trigger the last switch. When you've triggered both labs, head back to the control room and access the C/D console. Flip this final switch to end the level.

OSCORP'S ULTIMATE WEAPON

Combat Move: None

When fighting the Super Mech on this level, you don't have to run around and dive in for the shield generators. At the start of the level, swing off to the left – there should be a big pillar you can hide behind – and go under to the other side. However, don't go all the way through or the Super Mech's laser will hit you. Instead, climb up that wall to reach a walkway and get on it. Up here you don't have to worry about Light Mechs or lightning bolts, because they can't travel this high. Nothing can hit you unless you're close to the edge. Target the shield generators, then jump or double-jump and do a web shot to destroy them in two or three attempts.

To destroy the four generators in the Super Mech's line of fire without getting hurt, web zip over to the area where he fires. When he starts to shoot, zip up to the ceiling and crawl to the area packed with lights. The Super Mech will fire, but cannot hit you. His line of fire hits the generators as you move across the ceiling. Continue to move back and forth on the ceiling and you can destroy four of the generators without being touched. Now wait until his beam goes towards the ground before you tackle him personally.

Apart from the laser, there are several smaller gun and missile stations scattered over the Mech's body, as well as a killbot cavalry that will also take potshots at you. Ignore these irritants and concentrate on the generators. There are four on the Mech's back and two just below its head – take them out using a three-punch attack. When all of the generators are destroyed, climb on the Mech's head and use combo attacks to take it down.

ESCAPE FROM OSCORP

Combat Move: Haymaker

When the level begins, you'll find yourself in front of a doorway. Dodge

the scanning beam and head forwards up a short staircase. Grab the COMBAT MOVE (Haymaker) and use it against the Super Soldiers you're about to take on.

Head down the left fork of the hallway (from the starting point) and follow the path to a doorway. Enter this control room and take the health icon, then access the console (**Ⓢ**) to turn the weapons off on one side of the offices. Afterwards, head back down the hallway, past the starting point to the other control room. Kill the robot inside, then use the control panel to disable the second round of defences.

Now kick through the window and jump into the room below. Head to the corner opposite the security door and trip the switch to open it. Avoid the light beam as you head through and you'll emerge in a stairwell. Hop down to the lower level and exit through the door, then use the adjacent console to open it. The next hallway is stacked full of Super Soldiers – just ignore them. Zip up to the ceiling, then zip to the end of the hall to complete the level.

MARY JANE KIDNAPPED

Combat Moves: None

The Green Goblin has kidnapped Mary Jane and is taking her on a wild ride through the city – your aim is to keep up with him. The key to completing this level is to hold down the swing button the whole time to gain speed. Also, try and cut corners to shorten the distance between you and your quarry. When the Goblin lays pumpkin bombs, simply raise and lower your swing to dodge them. Eventually, the Goblin tires of the chase and stops.

FACE-OFF AT THE BRIDGE

Combat Moves: None

You begin the level by swinging towards the top tier of the bridge. Swing over to Mary Jane quickly, because if you waste time, the flames on the bridge will fry her like a freshly cracked egg in Death Valley. Grab your gal using **Ⓢ**, then turn around and drop. Before you reach the ground, swing over to the highlighted circle on the surface of the bridge. Let Mary Jane go by pressing **Ⓢ** again, then get ready to fight the Green Goblin for the last time.

This fight is similar to your previous encounters, so the same rules apply. Select Camera Lock to keep the fiend in your sights during the whole affair. As before, you always want to be swinging towards (and preferably above) him. If he passes you, press **Ⓢ** to cut your web and face the opposite direction. When the Goblin is below you, leap on him and kick some Goblin hide. If he's at the same level, use your swing-kick to inflict the damage. Swing at different heights to avoid the incoming pumpkin bombs and machine gun fire.

Once the blue portion of the Goblin's life bar disappears, he drops to the ground and prepares to fight his lycra-clad nemesis hand-to-hand. You've sampled his skills before, so keep your distance and hit him with Impact Webbing. If you don't wear down the Goblin fully the first time you knock him down, he gets back on his glider and you have to repeat the whole process again. If you need health or webbing during the course of this battle, try the following:

1. A health on the fiery plateau where you rescued Mary Jane.
2. On the same bridge support, one tier down, you'll find either a health and a webbing icon or two webbing icons.
3. In the small opening in the centre of the bridge support (at street level) you'll find either a webbing or a health icon.

Once you've defeated the Goblin, sit back, put your feet up and watch the final cinematics, then be sure to check the Secret Store to see if you've managed to unlock anything. ☐

SPIDEY CHEATS

SPOILER ALERT! How to unlock everything the unscrupulous way...

To access all levels, new effects and 'crazy' new characters, go to the Cheats option in the Specials menu and enter the following codes. If they work, you'll hear a Goblin cackle! To disable the effects, simply enter the same code again.

Cheat	Code
Unlock everything	ARACHNID
Unlock all levels	IMIARMAS
Level skip	ROMITAS
Bonus training levels	HEADEXPLODY
All fighting moves	KOALA
Big head Spidey	GOESTOYOURHEAD
Big head enemies	JOELSPENUTS
First-person mode	UNDERTHEMASK
Small Spidey	SPIDERBYTE
Matrix mode	DODGETHIS
Play as a thug	THUGSRUS
Play as a scientist	SERUM
Play as Mary Jane	GIRLNEXTDOOR
Play as Knuckles	KNUCKLES
Play as Uncle Ben's killer	STICKYRICE
Play as the Shocker	HERMANSCHULTZ
Play as a cop	REALHERO
Play as Captain Stacey	CAPTAINSTACEY
Play in Goblin suit	FREAKOUT
Unlimited webbing	ORGANICWEBBING
Unlimited Green Goblin glider power	CHILLOUT

SPIDEY SECRETS!

ANOTHER SPOILER ALERT! Here's a few treats in store for expert swingers...

Aptly enough, *Spider-Man* is crawling with secrets – but how do you access them? The most direct solution is to cheat, but if you want to earn your benefits by performing only like a spider can, here's how to go about unlocking those prizes...

■ Level Warp

Whenever you beat a level, it's added to the Level Warp in the Specials menu. By using this feature, you can revisit a particular level at any time and hunt down any missed secret areas and Combat Moves. The scores for each level are also displayed here, so you can attempt to beat them and accumulate the points required to unlock the items in the Secret Store.

■ How to... play as the Green Goblin easily!

Beating the game on the Hero or, worse still, Super Hero difficulty setting is a tall order, so thankfully there's an easy way to play out the alternative Green Goblin scenario. Simply start a new game on either of the two hardest difficulty levels and then quit back out and go to the Cheats screen in the Specials menu. Enter the 'ARACHNID' code to unlock everything – including all of the levels in the Level Warp option – and then go to the Conclusion cinematic. After it's run, the game will register that you have beaten it on the hardest difficulty setting and award you the Green Goblin feature in the Secret Store. Now simply turn it on and away you go!

■ Secret Store

Complete a level and you're given a score to indicate how well you've performed. Once this score starts to escalate, you'll unlock new features in the Secret Store. Take a look inside to find out what scores are required to unlock an item. It's worth noting that your score will be bigger if you manage to uncover secret areas within the levels (all of which are shown in this walkthrough) and defeat enemies using the more complex combos you acquire by finding the hidden Combat Moves. Here's the full low-down on the prizes you can unlock racking up monster scores:

10,000 Points – Pinhead Bowling

This unlocks an extra mini-game in the Training mode. The idea is to knock down bowling pins by swinging down the aisle.

20,000 Points – Movie: Vulture

Your prize for accumulating 20K's worth of points in Story mode is this hidden FMV sequence that will be added to the Gallery.

30,000 Points – Movie: Shocker

Your prize for accumulating 30K's worth of points in Story mode is another hidden FMV sequence that will be added to the Gallery.

50,000 Points – Unlimited Webbing

Ensure that Spider-Man is never caught short of sticky string.

Beat the game on at least 'Easy'

Make it through the adventure on its easiest setting and you unlock the option to play through the game in a Peter Parker or Wrestler skin. Just activate it at the Secret Store Menu and start a new game.

Beat the game on at least 'Normal'

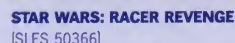
Beat the game on the standard difficulty setting and you can play through the game in an Alex Ross (cool Marvel Comics artist) skin. If you complete it on this difficulty setting first, then you also unlock the Easy difficulty prizes as well.

Beat the game on at least 'Hero'

Nail this game on the harder settings and your prize is the ability to play the game as the Green Goblin. This isn't just a snazzy new skin for Spider-Man, though, because you're actually Harry Osborn – the Green Goblin's son – and get to play out an alternate scenario whereby you're fighting to clear the family name. Cool.





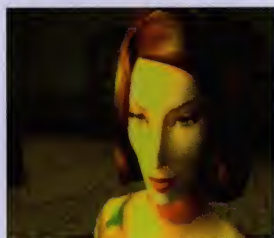


To enable Cheat mode, you'll have to set a brand-new record (Best Lap, Best Three Lap, Most KOs) and then enter NO TIME on the Name Entry screen. Once you've done this, you can activate any of the following codes by holding down **(L) + (R) + (A) + (B)** and then quickly pressing the corresponding codes on the main menu, as follows...

Bonus characters: Like *Star Wars*? Really! *Star Wars*? It's your lucky light year! You can unlock all these extra *Star Wars* characters just by completing one of the following tasks...

Character	Task
Anakin	Get the fastest lap time for every track.
Darth Maul	Get the top KO score for every track.
Darth Vader	Unlock Anakin (<i>Episode I</i> version), Watto and the nefarious Darth Maul, you have to win Tournament mode as one of those racers.
Watto	Get in the fastest three lap times for every track.
Sebulba	Win first place in all three tournaments as Sebulba.
Mawhonic	Win the last of the first four circuits in Tournament mode.
Clegg Fasthold	Rank higher than the track favourite on Watchtower Run.
Gasgano	Rank higher than the track favourite on Badlands.
Knire Dark	Rank higher than the track favourite on Baldest Complex.
Kraid Nemmeso	Rank higher than the track favourite on Ruins Of Carnuss Gorgull.
Mars Guo	Rank higher than the track favourite on Grand Reefs.
Scorch Zanales	Rank higher than the track favourite on Citadel.

Repair without losing speed: Here's a handy hint to remember – when you are racing and have sustained damage, hold down **LT** + **RT** to get the problem quickly repaired in-game without losing speed or having to pause.



Mission Select: Highlight the 'Load Game' option at the main menu, then hold L3 + R3 and press  to enter the 'Select Mission' screen. From here you can choose any starting point from any mission, including debriefing/training. When you're done, simply press  to exit.



When the game has loaded, proceed to 'Match Mode', using controller one only, and select 'Club Teams'. Now, still using controller one, select controller two as the 'Away Team', then press **△** to cycle back a screen and then select 'Club Teams' again. Don't change anything and use the **△** button

Cheat Code

Super soldiers (A, B, X, A, X, B, X)
 Super enemies (A, A, X, B, X, A, A)
 2000 Electricity (X, X, X, X, X, X, X)
 5000 Plastic (A, B, X, X, A, B)
 Paratroopers (B, B, X, X, A, A)
 Xtra dump truck resources
 (X, B, X, X, X, X)
 Green army is blue (A, A, X, X, X, X, X)
 Tan army is green (A, A, X, X, X, A, A)
 Kill your soldiers (B, X, X, X, X, X)



Shotgun: Successfully complete the game in Arcade mode using the cane

Following on from the stack of cheat codes we supplied last Issue, we have now discovered a master code that unlocks all missions, cheats and extras instantly. Go to the Passwords screen in Options and enter DAWOIKS. If the code has worked, then the keyboard of the Enigma code machine will flash green. To access the 'Extras' film reels in Gallery, simply highlight the box of mission reels and press **Enter**.



Cheat Mode: Hold down **U** + **U** at the title screen and then press **C**, **C**, **C**, **C**, **U**, **C**, **U**, **C**. Release **U**, press **C**, then release **U**. Now start the game to have all weapons with unlimited ammunition. Now who's run out of ammo, eh?



Unlock Ace Mode: Once you've won all the rewards in Normal and Pro modes, you'll unlock the challenging Ace mode. To access it, go to the difficulty select screen in Single Race mode and

Unlock that music video:
Well, it wouldn't be much of a Britney game without that saliva-inducing 'Baby One More Time' video of her parading around high school in a temperature-souring uniform, now would it? To unlock this, simply acquire 9999 points in Audition mode. That's way too easy!

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the
Getaway

THE SHORTLIST

WANT THE DEFINITIVE VERDICTS ON THE PS2 GAMES AVAILABLE RIGHT NOW? THEN WELCOME TO THE SHORTLIST.

OPS2 AWARDS

To filter out the pearls from the swine, OPS2 has introduced a brand new colour-coded ratings system.



GOLD
Only awarded to games that score the full 10/10.



SILVER
Only awarded to games that score the full 09/10.



BRONZE
Only awarded to games that score the full 08/10.

2002 FIFA WORLD CUP (EA SPORTS/EA)

The World Cup version of FIFA 2002 with more pizzazz but sadly lacking in game modes.
Overall 07

7 BLADES (Konami/KCEJ)

Ninja-styled adventure with a 'healthy' dose of chopsocky gameplay.
Overall 06

18 WHEELER (ACCLAIM/SEGA/ACCLAIM CHELTENHAM)

Brash, chunky and colourful truck racer. Unfortunately it just doesn't offer enough substance to satisfy the hardened gamer.
Overall 06

ACE COMBAT: DISTANT THUNDER (SCEE/Namco)

Best Ace Combat yet. A graphically-polished flight sim with a variety of missions.
Overall 07

AFL LIVE 2003 (Acclaim/IR Gurus)

Good enough to be a must buy for footy fans, but not flashy or deep enough to compete with big budget sport sims.
Overall 06

★ AGGRESSIVE INLINE (Acclaim/Z Axis)

There's more than enough inline action to keep you impressed, entertained and amused until Tony Hawk's 4 says, "Buy me, dude!"
Overall 08

★ AIRBLADE (SCEE/Criterion)

Intricate visuals, sublime handling, massive airs - everything you could want hoverboarding to be.
Overall 08

ALL-STAR BASEBALL 2002 (Acclaim/Acclaim Studios Austin)

An enjoyable all-round game of baseball with oodles of depth, and surprisingly compelling to watch as well as to play.
Overall 07

ALONE IN THE DARK: THE NEW NIGHTMARE (Infogrames/Darkworks)

An undeniably scary survival horror game series, but one that fails to frighten the pants off the PS2 in this comeback.
Overall 06

AQUA AQUA: WETRIX 2.0 (SCI/Zed Two)

Addictive, well-realised update of the N64 puzzler Wetrix.
Overall 07

ARCTIC THUNDER (Midway/Midway/Inland Productions)

Crude visuals, but plenty of fast and furious gameplay.
Overall 07

ARMORED CORE 2 (Ubi Soft/From Software)

Infinitely-tweakable first-person mech shooter.
Overall 07

ARMY MEN AIR ATTACK: BLADE'S REVENGE (3DO/3DO)

Dullsville helicopter game.
Overall 02

ARMY MEN: GREEN ROGUE (3DO/3DO)

On-rails shooter that manages to plumb new depths of soldiering tedium.
Overall 01

ARMY MEN: SARGE'S HEROES 2 (3DO/3DO)

Another poorly realised shooter, from the series that stars little green plastic soldiers.
Overall 03

★ BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE (Interplay/Black Isle Studios)

Play Dungeons & Dragons in digital format. An RPG that does the PS2 great justice.
Overall 08

BARBARIAN (Interplay/Titus)

A rough-cut fighting game with RPG elements and branching storylines.
Overall 07

BATMAN VENGEANCE (Ubi Soft/Ubi Soft)

Interesting action adventure, but just a little too 'on rails' to provide a real challenge.
Overall 06

BLOOD OMEN 2 (Eidos/Crystal Dynamics)

An occasionally very satisfying blood sucking adventure let down by unoriginal gameplay.
Overall 06

★ BURNOUT (Acclaim/Criterion Studios)

OutRun grows up, and learns how to crash properly. Thrilling, edgy race action that will threaten your no claims bonus.
Overall 08

★ CAPCOM VS SNK 2 (Capcom)

A superb 2D beat-'em-up from the house that knows all there is to know about combat. With endless two-player fun.
Overall 08

CART FURY: CHAMPIONSHIP RACING (Midway/Midway)

Arcade racer with crazy physics and a dose of high-speed hard shouldering.
Overall 06

★ COMMANDOS 2 (Eidos/Pyro)

A daunting but extremely worthy and rewarding strategy game. What more could you want?
Overall 08

CONFLICT ZONE

(Ubi Soft/MASA)

A pretty run-of-the-mill RTS game that cleverly forces you to take account of media coverage.
Overall 06

CRASH BANDICOOT: THE WRATH OF CORTX (Vivendi Universal/Traveller's Tales)

Crash spins onto PS2 but little has changed from PSone.
Overall 06

★ CRAZY TAXI (Acclaim/Sega/Acclaim)

Arcade thrills aplenty in this no-holds-barred city-smashing racer. If you want speed, buy this now.
Overall 08

★ CRICKET 2002 (EA Sports/EA Sports)

The best leather-on-willow sim on any console, ever. Relax and make like it's summer.
Overall 08

DARK CLOUD (SCEE/Level 5)

An enthralling RPG with atmospheric music and a world-building element thrown in for good measure.
Overall 07

DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX 2 (Acclaim/Z-Axis)

Orthodox but impressive, this BMX sim has an inventive array of tricks.
Overall 07

DEAD OR ALIVE 2 (SCEE/Tecmo)

Blistering beat-'em-up that's famous for its stealthy gameplay and collection of extremely well-endowed lady fighters.
Overall 07

★ DEUS EX (Eidos/Ion Storm)

The thinking man's action/shooter/adventure genre-busting game that redefines expectations. Superb.
Overall 09

★ DEVIL MAY CRY (Capcom)

Melding rip-roaring battling with lush surroundings and a superb gothic atmosphere. One of the best PS2 games yet? Definitely.
Overall 09

DNA (Virgin Interactive/Hudsonsoft)

Gene warfare and confusing puzzles abound in this bizarre manga adventure.
Overall 06

DONALD DUCK: QUACK ATTACK (Ubi Soft/Disney Interactive)

A first-generation platformer that suffers from Stone Age gamplay and graphics.
Overall 04

DRAGON'S LAIR

(Digital Leisure/ Cinematronics)
Unplayable retro adventure. Should have stayed firmly stuck on the Laser Disc where it belonged.
Overall 02

DRIVEN (BAM! Entertainment/BAM! Studios Europe)

Poor racing game from a poor film licence.
Overall 04

DRIVING EMOTION TYPE-S (EA/Square)

Dismal racer. Fails to evoke any emotion at all.
Overall 04

★ DROPSHIP: UNITED PEACE FORCE (SCEE/Studio Camden)

Impressive combat sim that rewards commitment with paced and varied gameplay.
Overall 08

★ DYNASTY WARRIORS 3 (THQ/KOEI)

More of the same great mass battles and explosive action, marred slightly by samey gameplay.
Overall 08

★ ECCO THE DOLPHIN: DEFENDER THE FUTURE (SCEE/Sega/Appaloosa)

You're a dolphin and it's up to you to save the world from an alien invasion. Relax in the new age calm of this underwater adventure.
Overall 08

★ ENDGAME (Empire/Cunning)

Sets a new standard in the lightgun shooter genre: innovative, refreshing and most of all, a ton of fun.
Overall 09

★ ESCAPE FROM MONKEY ISLAND (Activision/LucasArts)

Adventure that includes smart visuals, witty script and intelligent puzzles.
Overall 08

ESPN INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD (Konami/KCEJ)

Graphically impressive athletics sim marred only by iffy AI.
Overall 06

ESPN NATIONAL HOCKEY NIGHT (Konami/KCEJ)

Other hockey sims on the market with better gameplay put this in the sin bin.
Overall 06

ESPN NBA 2NIGHT (Konami/KCEJ)

Hardcore gameplay makes this one for basketball heads only.
Overall 06

ESPN X GAMES SKATEBOARDING (Konami/KCEJ)

Not-very-extreme skateboarding sim with some unsightly graphical glitches. You're best off sticking

with Tony Hawk's.
Overall 05

ESPN WINTER X-GAMES SNOWBOARDING (Konami/KCEJ)

Lifelike snowboarder, ruined by unsightly bland graphics, unresponsive controls and a lack of excitement.
Overall 06

EOE: EVE OF EXTINCTION (Eidos/Yuke's)

A dull, button mashing affair.
Overall 05

EVERGRACE (Ubi Soft/From Software)

An ultimately depressing role-playing game, that fails to engage the player at any meaningful level.
Overall 02

EVIL TWIN (Ubi Soft/In-Utero)

Adventure from the dark side of platforming. Average, far-from-perfect animation with 76 levels of twisted plot.
Overall 05

EXTERMINATION (SCEE/Deep Space)

Alien-inspired survival horror-fest that is set in a deserted Antarctic research base. Positively crawling with cool design innovations.
Overall 07

★ EXTREME-G 3 (Acclaim/Acclaim)

A neon beast of a future bike racer that requires skill and brains. Takes some 'inspiration' from the WipeOut series. Not for the faint-hearted.
Overall 08

F1 2001 (EA Sports/EA Sports)

Another solid PlayStation 2 Formula One title, but ultimately it's a tad soulless.
Overall 07

F1 CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON 2000 (EA Sports/EA Visual Sciences)

Hardcore F1 fans will find this a little too easy.
Overall 06

FANTAVISION (SCEE/SCEI)

The world's first fireworks game. Not enormous, but of rare and random beauty.
Overall 05

FIFA 2002 (EA Sports/EA Sports Canada)

Despite admirable improvements, this is still a goal down to Pro Evolution. Gameplay.
Overall 06

FIFA WORLD CUP (EA Sports/EA Sports Canada)

Nice innovations for the Official World Cup Game.
Overall 06

FINAL FANTASY X

SIX OF THE BEST

ROLE-PLAYING GAMES



1. FINAL FANTASY X

Bigger, better and more beautiful than ever, Square's lavish addition to the series may not be to everyone's taste, but for fans it's pure manna from heaven. Spectacular CG cut-scenes drive the sprawling narrative and the battle system's been revamped, too.

*Final Fantasy X is out now from SCEE

2. DARK CLOUD

Mixing standard adventuring with a novel world-building element, *Dark Cloud* is a beautifully designed effort, very much in the classic Japanese mould.

*Dark Cloud is out now from SCEE



3. BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE

Essentially a stripped down version of the PC hit, *Baldur's Gate* is an enthralling game on PS2 and an epic challenge to boot.

*Baldur's Gate is out now from Interplay



4. SHADOW HEARTS

A typically Japanese RPG, with a gameplay dynamic founded on random turn-based battles and simple controls. Basically, it's *Final Fantasy* lite.

*Shadow Hearts is out now from Midway



5. JADE COCOON 2

An interesting spin on *Pokémon*'s monster-breeding gameplay. A decent Tutorial mode helps set the mood for some inter-species luvvin'.

*Jade Cocoon 2 is out now from Ubi Soft



6. SUMMONER

Slightly ropey graphics are saved by decent characterisation and intriguing sub-plots. One of PS2's oldest RPGs – and it shows – but THQ has a sequel on the way.

*Summoner is out now from THQ



[SQUARE]

Nothing else needs to be said about this brilliant RPG.

Overall 09

★ FORMULA ONE 2001
(SCEE/Studio Liverpool)

Still the best F1 game to reach the PS2 yet. All the drivers, tracks and cars included. Load it up and feel the speed.

Overall 08

FREETSTYLE

(EA Sports/Page 44)

This is potentially a great game, but it's scuppered by careless lack of fairness and failure to reward skill with progression.

Overall 07

★ FUR FIGHTERS
(Acclaim/Bizarre Creations)

Cute fluffy creatures armed to the teeth with shotguns blast each other to pieces. The toy cupboard will never look innocent again.

Overall 08

G1 JOCKEY
(THQ/Koei)

More like an exercise in statistical analysis than a horse racing game, with bland graphics and sound.

Overall 05

GIANTS: CITIZEN KABUTO
(Interplay/Planet Moon)

The Reaper might be cool, but loading times hamper this port of a complex PC battle game.

Overall 06

★ GITAROO MAN
(THQ/Koei)

If you have a PS2 collection, you should definitely have at least one game like this one in there! Check it out.

Overall 08

GLOBAL TOURING
CHALLENGE: AFRICA

(Rage/Rage Warrington)
An impressive racer that is further lifted by clever use of interesting locations.

Overall 07

GRANDIA II
(Ubi Soft/GameArts)

Expansive, classic RPG adventuring but with horrible graphics and repetitive, uninvolved gameplay.

Overall 05

★ GRAND THEFT AUTO 3
(Rockstar Games/DMA Design)

The original crim sim goes 3D. The game has its flaws, but there's nothing else quite as sick, inventive and funny on the shelves. Buy it.

Overall 10

★ GRAN TURISMO
3: A-SPEC

(SCEE/Polyphony Digital)
If you didn't know already, GT3 is the greatest driving game in the world. Buy it now.

Overall 09

G-SURFERS
(Midas Interactive/
Blade Interactive)

Futuristic racer that's improved by an innovative track editor.

Overall 07

★ GUILTY GEAR X
(Virgin/Sammy)

Pushes hard at beat-'em-up boundaries. The start of a new wave of next-gen 2D fighters.

Overall 08

GUN GRIFFON BLAZE
(Swing/GameArts)

A mech shooter for robot obsessives everywhere.

Overall 07

H30 SURFING
(Take 2/ASCII)

Inadequate surf sim, although the water's well realised.

Overall 04

★ HALF-LIFE
(Vivendi Universal/
Valve/Gearbox)

The award-winning PC first-person shooter/adventure arrives on PS2 in resplendent form. An essential purchase.

Overall 09

HEADHUNTER
(SCEE/Amuze)

Dirty Harry meets *MGS2* in a world where the law is controlled by bounty hunters. There's a great game here somewhere, but we only got glimpses of it.

Overall 07

HEROES OF MIGHT
AND MAGIC
(3DO/3DO)

Patchy PC-style adventure.

Overall 03

HOLOGRAM TIME
TRAVELLER

(Digital Leisure/Sega)
It may be called a 'classic' but avoid this like the plague.

Overall 02

★ INTERNATIONAL
SUPERSTAR SOCCER
(Konami/Ozisoft)

Genuine squads and more instant terrace gratification take ISS up to the PS2 level.

Overall 08

ISS 2

(Konami/Ozisoft)
More arcade than PES with better commentary, but dodgy ball physics and animation.

Overall 07

★ JAK AND DAXTER: THE
PRECURSOR LEGACY
(SCEE/Naughty Dog)

A brilliant platformer from the makers of *Crash Bandicoot* introduces two heroes you'll be seeing a lot more of.

Overall 09

★ JAMES BOND 007 IN...
AGENT UNDER FIRE

[EA/EA Redwood Shores]

A thrilling single-player Bond experience, with a great Four-player mode and beautiful leading ladies. Almost on a par with N64's *GoldenEye*.

Overall 08

JEREMY MCGRATH
SUPERCROSS WORLD
(Acclaim/Acclaim
Studios Salt Lake)

A motocross game that's just like the real thing (minus the realism, thrills, speed, gritty handling and mud).

Overall 03

JET SKI RIDERS

(Eidos/Opus Corporation)

Great water effects and Kawasaki-licensed Jet Skis. Shame about the average racing, though.

Overall 06

KENGU: MASTER
OF BUSHIDO

(Ubi Soft/LightWeight)
A padded-out Training mode makes up for this smart ninja fighter's otherwise rather limited nature.

Overall 06

KESENIN

(Electronic Arts/KOEI)

A real-time strategy game set in feudal Japan, where you get to command a huge army. Initially confusing, potentially enthralling.

Overall 07

★ KLONOA 2:
LUNATEA'S VEIL

(SCEE/Namco)
Cute and cheerful platformer featuring the lovable gloved blue cat-rabbit hybrid.

Overall 08

KNOCKOUT KINGS 2001
(EA Sports/EA Sports)

A more-than-competent boxing sim. Not good enough to earn its royal status, though.

Overall 06

KURI KURI MIX

(Empire/From Software)

A blend of two-player co-operation and cutesy platformer. An odd but worthwhile addition to any PS2 collection.

Overall 07

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING
(Acclaim/Acclaim)

'Violent ballet' with a shortage of modes and options. Fine recreation of Pro wrestling.

Overall 05

★ LE MANS 24 HOURS
(Infogrames/Melbourne House)

Accessible for the gamer who's daunted by ultra-accurate sim-style vehicle handling, but has depth and thrills in abundance.

Overall 08

★ LMA MANAGER 2002
(Codemasters/)

Codemasters]

Brilliant soccer management game that allows you to get as involved as you want.

Overall 08

★ MAT HOFFMANS PRO
BMX 2
(Activision/Rainbow)

Whilst impressive in many areas and exceptional in some, *MHPB2* doesn't quite live up to expectations.

Overall 08

★ MAX PAYNE
(Take 2/Rockstar)

A fine shooting game that is somewhat underrated by the general public. Fantastic innovations that is completed with a very cinematic feel.

Overall 08

★ MAXIMO
(THQ/Capcom)

Attribute to *Ghosts 'N Goblins* and an excellent mix of retro and modern gaming, resulting in one of the strongest 3D platformers available.

Overall 08

★ MDK2 ARMAGEDDON
(Interplay/BioWare)

Originally a game on Dreamcast and PSone, this third-person action shooter in space has lost nothing in translation. Has three playable characters and is destined to be a cult classic.

Overall 09

★ MEDAL OF HONOR:
FRONTLINE
(EA/EA LA)

A very realistic FPS that has been wowing audiences the world over since the game was released. This is a superb game that should not be overlooked.

Overall 09

★ METAL GEAR SOLID 2:
SONS OF LIBERTY
(Konami/KCEJ)

A must-own, state-of-the-art tactical espionage action game that's reason enough to buy a PS2. A superbly paced, surprising story with intelligence and soul. Unbeatable sound and graphics – a benchmark for future PS2 titles.

Overall 10

MIDNIGHT CLUB

(Rockstar/Angel Studios)

Speedy, urban racing that boasts huge and action-packed New York and London environments. Sadly, the gameplay ain't that great.

Overall 04

MODERNGROOVE:
MINISTRY OF SOUND

(Ubi Soft/ModernGroove)
An entertaining lightshow generator, containing five full dance albums.

Overall 06

MONSTERS, INC.

(SCEE/Disney Interactive)

Disney Platform game, based

on the film. Initially amusing but sloppy and basic with a lifespan of no more than a few hours, though the film clips are entertaining.

Overall 04

MOTO GP
(SCEE/Namco)

Gran Turismo on two wheels? A fantastic motorbike sim that rewards repeated play.

Overall 07

MOTO GP 2
(3DO/3DO)

A refreshing bike racer. Slightly repetitive gameplay and a shallow multiplayer, but slick, fast and realistic. Excellent 3D graphics and race replay facility.

Overall 07

MOTOR MAYHEM
(Infogrames/Beyond Games)

Unoriginal deathmatch-based vehicle blasting.

Overall 05

★ MTV MUSIC
GENERATOR

(Codemasters/Jester)
Home DJ sample/mixer music maker. It's enormous fun and nigh-on faultless. This is exciting and well put together – pick it up and start making your own choons!

Overall 09

MX 2002 FEATURING
RICKY CARMICHAEL
(THQ/Pacific Coast Power)

Polished and engaging motocross sim that utilises its subject matter to great effect.

Overall 07

MX RIDER

(Infogrames/Paradigm)
Motocross/supercross sim that lacks the true grittiness and excitement of the sport.

Overall 06

NBA HOOPZ
(Midway/Eurocom)

Solid and playable. Thrills are thin on the ground, though.

Overall 06

NBA LIVE 2001
(EA Sports/EA Sports Canada)

Solid and playable. Thrills are thin on the ground, though.

Overall 06

NBA LIVE 2002
(EA Sports/EA Sports Canada)

An update of NBA Live 2001? Only for true basketball nuts.

Overall 06

NBA STREET
(EA Sports Big/EA Sports)

Great looks, great to play, but not what most will want. There's room for improvement.

Overall 06

★ NFL QUARTERBACK
CLUB

(Acclaim/Acclaim Studios Austin)
American football game that

THE SHORTLIST

has unique features, but unable to compete with *Madden 2002*.
Overall 08

★ **NHL 2001**
(EA Sports/EA Sports Canada)
EA Sports' perennial ice hockey licence that hits the mark. As Jamie Oliver might say, "Pucka!"
Overall 08

★ **NHL 2002**
(EA Sports/EA Sports Canada)
The definitive ice hockey videogame, and a marked improvement on *NHL 2001*.
Overall 08

NHL HITZ 2002
(Midway/Black Box)
A satisfying, if short-lived, arcade-style ice hockey game.
Overall 06

NY RACE
(Wanadoo/Kalisto)
Average future taxi racer, based on the opening sequence of Luc Besson's sci-fi epic *The Fifth Element*. Nothing Crazy to see here.
Overall 05

ONI
(Rockstar/Bungie Software)
New character animation in an enjoyable third-person sci-fi romp.
Overall 07

★ **ONIMUSHA: WARLORDS**
(Capcom/Capcom)
Impressive survival horror that lets the PlayStation 2 run riot. Does suffer from an iffy PAL conversion, though.
Overall 08

OPERATION WINBACK
(Midas Interactive/KOEI)
Lacks variety, but still manages to be an enjoyable stealth shooter, nevertheless.
Overall 06

ORPHEN
(Activision/Shade Inc)
Disappointing anime-inspired Japanese RPG.
Overall 04

PARAPPA THE RAPPER 2
(SCEE/NanaOn-sha)
Rhythm action game from Japan in which you play a rapping dog. Simple but compelling gameplay. Short life span and only really

worth revisiting for nostalgia.
Overall 07

PARIS-DAKAR RALLY
(Acclaim/Broadword Interactive)
Based on the race of the same name, this sim does little to inspire interest.
Overall 05

PENNY RACERS
(Midas/Takara)
A half-baked and underfed *GTX*, with just a few good tracks to recommend it.
Overall 04

POLICE 24/7
(Konami/KCET)
Basic cop-shot light gun game with motion capture option. Frantic and fast but lacks structure and individuality. Just another on-rails shoot-'em-up.
Overall 05

POOLMASTER
(Take 2/Ask)
Dull pool sim, despite some tidy ball physics.
Overall 05

PORTAL RUNNER
(3DO/3DO)
Vikki, of *Army Men* notoriety, gets her own title. It's the best of a bad bunch.
Overall 05

PRISONER OF WAR
(Codemasters/Wide Games)
Escaping from POW camps is all well and good, but you remain a prisoner of often rigid game objectives. Even so, this is a bold, compelling adventure game.
Overall 07

★ **PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER**
(Konami/Konami TYO)
Konami TYO updates *ISS Pro Evolution* and creates the best PS2 football sim yet.
Overall 09

★ **PROJECT EDEN**
(Eidos/Core Design)
Look beyond some not-great visuals and you'll lose weeks to this complex and satisfying first-person shooter/adventure.
Overall 08

★ **QUAKE III**
(EA/id & Bullfrog)
In four-player, this FPS is the best multiplayer yet. A technical tour de force, it runs like

greased lightning and looks absolutely gorgeous.
Overall 09

RAYMAN M
(Ubi Soft/Ubi Studios France)
Based primarily on multiplayer action. Some good ideas, but the gameplay is nothing new.
Overall 06

★ **RAYMAN REVOLUTION**
(Ubi Soft/Ubi Soft)
Animation-quality graphics elevate this classic platformer starring a disjointed hero. A title worthy of PS2.
Overall 08

RC REVENGE PRO
(Acclaim/Acclaim Cheltenham)
A distinct lack of any discernable speed makes this an avoidable kart racer.
Overall 03

READY 2 RUMBLE: ROUND 2
(Midway/Midway)
A marvellous, arcade-based comedy boxing game, pitting ridiculous cartoon fighters against each other.
Overall 07

★ **RED FACTION**
(THQ/Volition)
Ace first-person shooter that melds *MGS*-style tactics and the all-out blasting of the hallowed *Quake III*. Marred only by some average level design.
Overall 08

★ **RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X**
(Capcom Eurosoft/Capcom)
A captivating story, cinematic atmosphere, kinetic action, frights, thrills and copious amounts of blood-letting. Give in to its disgustingly depraved clutches.
Overall 09

★ **REZ**
(SCEE/Sega (UGA))
Fight computer viruses from within the system. Exploring the relationship between sound and colour this techno shooter provides pure gameplay.
Overall 09

RIDGE RACER V
(SCEE/Namco)
A popular racer, but high hopes were scuppered by the limited size and a lack of originality.
Overall 07

★ **RING OF RED**
(Konami/KCEJ)
A mech RTS that's fun? Oh yes. A must-buy for the discerning robo-fetishist after something different.
Overall 08

ROBOT WARLORDS
(Midas Interactive/DaZZ)
Many other superior mech games make this redundant in a somewhat minority genre in Australia.
Overall 04

ROBOT WARS
(BBC Multimedia/Climax)
TV show tie-ins rarely work. This could have been a whole lot better. Stick to watching the real 'bot battles instead.
Overall 05

RUGBY
(EA Sports/Creative Assembly)
So far the only PS2 game to represent this sport. More akin to *Madden* than FIFA in approach, a highly enjoyable and refined take on the sport. EA Sports does it again.
Overall 08

★ **RUMBLE RACING**
(EA/EA)
Fast and furious arcade stunt racer that has tons of challenge and replay value, especially in Two-Player mode. Full of totally insane courses to put you through your paces.
Overall 08

RUNE: VIKING WARLORD
(Take 2/Human Head)
A Viking slash-'em-up that should have been confined to the Dark Ages.
Overall 04

SALT LAKE 2002
(Ozisoft/Attention To Detail)
Soulless Winter Olympics game. Decent weather effects but the majority of events are rather tedious. Not much variety and a limited life span.
Overall 03

★ **SHADOW OF MEMORIES**
(Konami/KCET)
Filmic adventure that keeps the surprises coming with a serpentine plot.
Overall 08

SHAUN PALMER'S PRO SNOWBOARDER

(Activision/Dearsoft)
Basically *Tony Hawk's* on snow. It's an exhilarating sport, but the gameplay is unimaginative and the controls sluggish.
Overall 06

★ **SILENT HILL 2**
(Konami/KCET Team Silent)
One of the most atmospheric and genuinely frightening titles on PS2. Like all of your worst nightmares rolled in to one relentless videogame.
Overall 09

★ **SILENT SCOPE**
(Konami/KCEJ)
Slick but simple shooting gallery-style game where you play a police sniper. A great launch title that we're still playing.
Overall 08

SILENT SCOPE 2
(Konami/Konami TYO)
A worthwhile update of this arcade sniper sim, though the formula is looking tired now.
Overall 07

SILPHEED: THE LOST PLANET
(Swing! Treasure/GameArts)
Tedious top-down shooter, that shouldn't be on PS2.
Overall 03

SIR ALEX FERGUSON'S PLAYER MANAGER 2002
(3DO/Anco)
Adept footy management sim, but lacks the killer goal.
Overall 06

★ **SKY ODYSSEY**
(SCEE/Cross for SCEI)
A flight sim where – somewhat unusually – you don't have to shoot anything, just complete crazy missions.
Overall 08

SLED STORM
(EA/EA BIG)
A maxed-out, splashy remake of the PSone racing classic, very much in the *SSX* mould.
Overall 06

SMASH COURT TENNIS PRO TOURNAMENT
(SCEE/Namco)
Deep & stylish this game suffers from disproportionate leaps in difficulty that may put off gamers.
Overall 07

SMUGGLER'S RUN 2: HOSTILE TERRITORIES
(Rockstar/Angel Studios)
Impressively big, fast and frantic, but not much different to its predecessor.
Overall 07

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE: GOLD EDITION
(Codemasters/Raven)
No-brainer first-person shooter that's average at best. Desensitise yourself to the violence and there's not much left.
Overall 05

SOUL REAVER 2
(Eidos Interactive/Crystal Dynamics)
Soul-sucking fantasy adventure that revolves around the exploits of Raziel and his huge Reaver sword.
Overall 07

SPACE RACE
(3DO/3DO)

The cartoon Kart racer in its simplest form. Lacks originality and is a poor *Mario Kart* rip-off.
Overall 05

SPIDER-MAN
(Activision/Treyarch)
It doesn't display huge innovations over its PSone counterpart, although it's a solid and enjoyable Spidey title either way.
Overall 07

SPLASHDOWN
(Infogrames/Rainbow Studios)
Above average Sea-Doo racer, with impressive water effects. The racing is sluggish, though.
Overall 07

★ **SPY HUNTER**
(Midway/Paradigm)
Pretend to be James Bond. Captures the spirit of the original game and adds further shiny next-gen knobs.
Overall 08

★ **SSX TRICKY**
(EA Sports Big/EA Sports Canada)
Inventive rainbow coloured high speed snowboard game packed with crazy courses, and crazier characters.
Overall 09

★ **STAR WARS: STARFIGHTER**
(Activision/LucasArts)
Mesmerising 3D Star Wars blaster with engaging missions and film-perfect sound effects.
Overall 09

STAR WARS: SUPER BOMBAD RACING
(Activision/Lucas Learning)
Banal cartoon kart racer. The Force is weak with this one.
Overall 05

STATE OF EMERGENCY
(Take 2/VIS Entertainment)
A shallow but worryingly enjoyable game that puts the player at the centre of a riot.
Overall 06

STAR TREK VOYAGER: ELITE FORCE
(Codemasters/Raven Software/Pipedream Interactive)
File next to *Soldier of Fortune* in the poor PC port drawer. If it's sci-fi shooter thrills your after, pick up *Red Faction* on platinum instead.
Overall 04

★ **STUNTMAN**
(Atari/Reflections)
Won't have the wide appeal of the driver games, but it's an ingenious concept that thrills and entertains.
Overall 08

★ **SUMMONER**
(THQ/Volition)
Although confined to strict RPG plot confines, this is an entertaining spectacle with expert storytelling.
Overall 08

SUPERCAR STREET CHALLENGE
(Activision/Exakt)
A by-the-book arcade racing game round desolate cities. Nothing to recommend it.
Overall 04

SWING AWAY GOLF
(EA Sports/T&E Soft)
Cutesy PSone golf sim that's let down by a poor PS2 conversion.
Overall 03

GLOSSARY

Just got your PS2? It's your first console ever and you've bought the best magazine to give the latest and most up-to-date information? But don't have a clue what we're going on about? Well, without wanting to patronise those gamers who've been round since the ZX Spectrum by spelling out the meaning of gaming terms and acronyms in the reviews and previews, here's your 'at a glance' guide to all things PS2 and technical.

Afterburn: An extra kick of power in flight sims.
AI: Artificial Intelligence.
Analogue: Re: Dual Shock 2. Registering degrees of input, as opposed to digital's on/off status.
Boards: Snowboarder or games featuring the alpine sport.
Coin-op: Coin-operated arcade videogames.
Cut-scene: Explanatory, non-playable scene in videogame (also FMV).
CPU: Central Processor Unit. Brains of PS2.
Dev kits: Programmable PS2s used by developers.
D-pad: Direction pad on PS2 controller.

Dual Shock controller: Controller for PSone.
Dual Shock 2: Controller designed for PS2 (with analogue).
ECTS: European Computer Trade Show.
E3: Electronic Entertainment Expo (US).
Frame rate: Number of images drawn per second in games. Higher frame rate = smoother animation.
FPS: First-Person Shooter (see *Quake III*).
Hack 'n' slash: Refers to game usually featuring a combat featuring blade combat.
High res: High resolution graphical.
HUD: Head Up Display.

Screen furniture such as map, speedometer etc.
Iconography: Graphical shorthand defining game, genre etc.
Low res: Refers to poor quality graphics.
L3: Pressing down on the PS2 controller's left joystick.
Mini-games: Bonus, playable games found in larger titles.
Polygon: Building block of videogame graphics.
PSone: The precursor to PS2. If you don't know what this is then frankly there's no hope for you.
Real-time: When one second of game time

signals one second in the real world.
RPG: Role-playing game.
RTS: Real-time strategy.
R3: Pressing down on the PS2 controller's right joystick.
Sim: Simulation.
Strafe: Move sideways while looking straight.
USB: Port to connect peripherals such as keyboard to PS2.
If there's a term, word or phrase that's still taking your brain cells, let us know and we'll include it here.

SIX OF THE BEST

OUR BETH IS PLAYING:



1. KELLY SLATER'S PRO SURFER

When I wasn't living in Australia, the beach was definitely the main thing that I missed. When I'm not here working on *OPS2*, you can find me on one of the beaches! I haven't yet mastered the waves, so I think I'll stick with Kelly's game for now. And he's nothing but spunk!

* Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer is out soon from Activision

2. ONIMUSHA 2

When the guys first got *Onimusha 2* and loaded it up, I was immediately impressed by the Intro movie. It's funny, I've been well and truly hooked ever since.

* Onimusha 2 is out now from THQ/Capcom



3. SUPER BUST A MOVE AGAIN

Everyone will probably laugh because it's the obvious choice for a 'girl gamer', but I've ALWAYS loved this game. I'd beat you all! And that's a challenge.

* Super Bust a Move Again is out soon from Ubi Soft



4. BURNOUT 2

We saw an early build of this game when we were over at E3, and it was one of the rare ones that actually stuck in my head. We have code now, and it absolutely smokes!

* Burnout 2 is out now from Acclaim



5. AFL LIVE 2003

Even I was disappointed with the finished game but I love watching the sport, so I'm willing to finish up any hard day at work with a few games! Oh, and I love Shane Crawford.

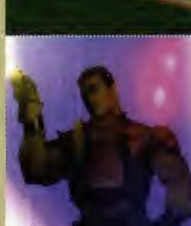
* AFL Live 2003 is out now from Acclaim



6. RED FACTION II

I'll admit it, I hate shooting games. Blame it on me being a girl, but I just can't help it. Knocking out walls this easily is fun though. I wish renovating was as easy as this!

* Red Faction II is out soon from THQ



TARZAN FREERIDE

(Ubi Soft/Disney Interactive)

Based on a Disney film of the same name, this tries to be different with 'surfing' tree branches. It doesn't work.

Overall 04

★ TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT (SCEE/Namco)

Fantastically playable and graphically spectacular beat-'em-up. The tagging moves should keep the Tekken faithful happy until the next 'proper' instalment reaches the shelves. Meanwhile, keep your eyes peeled for Tekken 4.

Overall 08

TEST DRIVE: OFFROAD WIDE OPEN (Infogrames/Angel Studios)

A tidy but limited offroad racer, from the makers of *Smuggler's Run*.

Overall 06

TOP GEAR: DARE DEVIL (Kemco/Papaya Studios)

Mission-based retro car racer that fails to provide innovation or excitement.

Overall 05

THE BOUNCER (SCEE/Squaresoft)

A fun, accessible brawler whose adventuring elements are fairly limited.

Overall 06

★ THE HOOBES (SCEE/Runecraft)

Strictly for gamers of pre-school age, this is a faithful and entertaining reproduction of the popular kids' show.

Overall 08

THE MUMMY RETURNS (Vivendi Universal/Blitz Games)

Sub-standard, adventure-based movie tie-in. You're better sticking to the more reliable *Tomb Raider* collection.

Overall 05

THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE (EA/Radical Entertainment)

It's *Crazy Taxi* but with Bart and Homer behind the wheel.

Overall 06

THE WEAKEST LINK (Activision/Activision)

You'll get more enjoyment playing along with the TV show than you will from putting up with the viper-tongued host.

Overall 04

THEME PARK WORLD (EA/Bullfrog)

Take on the role of a theme park tycoon for a day in this engaging god sim, where pleasing the crowds and getting those turnstyles a-spinning is your prime directive.

Overall 07

THIS IS FOOTBALL 2002 (SCEE/Team SoHo)

An atmospheric and playable addition to a revived series.

Overall 07

THUNDERHAWK: OPERATION PHOENIX (Eidos/Core Design)

A brave attempt to blend arcade and sim with choppers.

Overall 07

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2001 (EA Sports/EA Sports)

Authentic golf sim, a tad undermined by a random control system.

Overall 06

★ TIME CRISIS 2 (SCEE/Namco)

PS2's first on-rails light gun title sets the standard for others to follow. Has a great Two-player co-op mode.

Overall 08

★ TIMESPLITTERS (Eidos/Free Radical Design)

Fun, fast, frantic and inventive first-person shooter. Buy it for the addictive split-screen multiplayer madness.

Overall 09

TOKYO XTREME RACER (Crave/Ubi Soft/Genki)

Sedate, and thus dull, racer.

Overall 04

★ TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3 (Activision/Neversoft)

Fantastic skate sim that's perfect to play whether you've got two minutes or two hours to spare. Notable for being the first PAL game to have online network play, too.

Overall 09

TOP GUN (Virgin Interactive/Digital Integrations)

A flight sim that seems to have been designed by people who have never even seen a plane. A few arcade thrills.

Overall 04

★ TWISTEDMETAL: BLACK (SCEE/Incognito)

On a post-nuclear-war planet, it's time to drive around in frenzied vehicle-based hedonism. This is everything that you'd expect a *Twisted Metal* game to be on PS2 - and then some.

Overall 08

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE (Take 2/Silicon Dreams)

A very run of the mill soccer title which, with its very narrow focus on a single tournament, has extremely limited appeal. If you have *ISS* or *FIFA*, you don't need this.

Overall 06

★ UNREAL TOURNAMENT (Infogrames/Epic Games)

A satisfyingly gory, totally over-the-top and immensely playable first-person shooter.

Overall 08

★ V8 SUPERCAR RACE DRIVER (Codemasters/OziSoft)

Real damage. real V8s. Real Aussie tracks. Real fun. The best racing game seen so far on the PlayStation 2 with the best cars in the world. What's there not to love?

Overall 09

★ V-RALLY 3 (Infogrames/Eden)

Not as instantly playable as *WRC*, but effort pays off with some very satisfying racing. It's head and shoulders above the majority of PS2 rally fare.

Overall 08

★ VAMPIRE NIGHT (SCEE/Namco)

A vampire-blasting light gun extravaganza that looks great but has questionable replay value once the bad boys are all put to rest. Again. Great for building bulging biceps, though.

Overall 08

VICTORIOUS BOXERS (Empire Interactive/ESP)

Offbeat Japanese boxing title that lacks the killer punch.

Overall 04

WACKY RACES STARRING DASTARDLY AND MUTTLEY

(Infogrames/Infogrames)

Misty-eyed fans of the TV series will love the visuals. A shame the game isn't all that great.

Overall 06

WALT DISNEY'S JUNGLE BOOK GROOVE PARTY (Ubi Soft/Disney Interactive)

The game guaranteed to get to dancing round your living room like a loon.

Overall 04

WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE? 2ND EDITION (Eidos/Revolution)

Scary animation of Tarrant and easy questions make this a chore. That is our final answer.

Overall 04

WILD WILD RACING (Rage/Rage)

Off-road buggy-racing game with initially discouraging handling. Stick with it, though, and the Stunt mode can become quite addictive.

Overall 06

★ WIPEOUT FUSION (SCEE/Studio Liverpool)

Style and substance are here in the most fully realised *Wipeout* yet. This future racer is as smart and extreme as it gets. With a cracking soundtrack.

Overall 09

WOODY WOODPECKER: ESCAPE FROM BUZZ BUZZARD'S PARK (3DO/3DO)

Unoriginal Platform adventure with a friendly cartoon look and solid, brightly coloured graphics.

Overall 03

★ WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER 2002 (Codemasters/Blade)

Extremely playable snooker sim that may convert sceptics. Take part in the all-star tournament playing as Hendry or Doherty. Incredibly playable.

Overall 08

WORLD DESTRUCTION LEAGUE: THUNDER TANKS (3DO/3DO)

Arcade tank sim that's brilliant in Four-Player Deathmatch mode. Lacks lasting appeal in One-Player mode, though.

Overall 07

WORMS BLAST (Team 17/Ubi Soft)

A Tetris-like departure from the usual Worms fare, but one that lacks depth.

Overall 06

★ WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP (SCEE/Evolution Studios)

The most realistic, exciting rally experience ever committed to a videogame. This is a pristine example of next-generation programming that no self-respecting gamer should be without.

Overall 09

★ WWE SMACKDOWN! 'JUST BRING IT!' (THQ/Yuke's)

Step into the spandex pants of The Rock and chums. This is without a doubt the most realistic representation of the WWE experience on a console yet. Top stuff.

Overall 08

★ ZONE OF THE ENDERS (Konami/KCEJ)

Cool mech thriller from *Metal Gear's* Hideo Kojima, with bonus *MGS2* demo just to get you in the mood.

Overall 09

DATABASE

Can't get hold of one of the games in The ShortList? Something gone wrong? Need to check a release date? Here's the definitive list of all Aussie PS2 publishers.

Acclaim
03 9674 9911
www.acclaim.com
Tea House/City 1, 28 O'Connell St
Sydney, NSW 2000

Activision Pty. Ltd.
02 9676 5718
www.activision.com
Century Plaza Level 7, 41 Rowland St
Epping, NSW 2127

Electronic Arts
02 9 64 8999
www.easports.com.au
Level 3, Suite 7, 13-15 Wentworth Avenue
Sydney Hills, NSW 2000

Interplay Australia
02 9431 1311
www.interplay.com
Unit 1, Level 3, 39 Herbert St
Leopards, NSW 2064

OutSoft (Infogrames)
1800 060 416
www.generation.com.au
32 Bowden St
Alexandria, NSW 2015

Red Ant Enterprises Pty. Ltd.
02 9882 3812
www.d-ant.com.au
Unit 1, 1 Short St
Cherrywood, NSW 2065

Sony Computer Entertainment
02 9324 9500
www.sce.net
PO Box 4023
Darlinghurst, NSW 2010
Anti-Piracy Hotline Number: 02 8934 5111
Anti-Piracy E-mail: piracy@scn.com

Take 2 Interactive
02 9482 3455
www.take2interactive.com.au
Unit 5, 6 18 Anzac Rd
Hornsby, NSW 2077

THQ Asia Pacific Pty. Ltd.
03 9573 9200
www.thq.com
Level 2, 578 St. Kilda Rd
Melbourne, Vic 3004

Ubisoft Entertainment
02 8303 1800
www.ubisoft.com
Level 3, 111 117 Devonshire St
Sydney Hills, NSW 2010

Vivendi Universal Interactive Australia Pty. Ltd. 02 9902 7724
www.vup-interactive.com.au
Sierra, Blizzard Ground Floor, 1 Chiffrin St
St Leonards, NSW 2065

THIS COULD BE YOU...
DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES?
GET READY TO FIGHT!

The Australian Tekken 4 Championships

The Search for Australia's Best Gamer is on...

THINK YOU'RE Australia's Best Gamer? Never been beaten in a round of *Tekken*? *Official Australian PlayStation 2 Magazine* is embarking on a nationwide search for the very best gamer in the country, and we're intending to uncover every contender from the back of Bourke to Timbuctoo!

Not only will you have bragging rights to the most coveted title in Australian gaming, the National Champion and a companion will travel to London in March 2003 to represent Australia on the International Stage and as a guest of the Official

Tekken 4 Party. The Grand Champion and Runner Up will each pick up a cash prize - so get ready to practice and get those passports ready!

16 regional finalists will be flown to Sydney in the month of January to determine the National Champion. What's the next step? The November issue of *Official Australian PlayStation 2 Magazine* will carry the Official Registration Form (you'll need this to lodge a certified entry) and every detail including dates and locations of when and how to enter. What's more, a copy of the

next issue will carry a playable *Tekken 4* demo so you'll be able to get some heavy practice in for the main event! Excited? Remember, *Official Australian PlayStation 2 Magazine* could be your ticket to the big time!

* Official registration form and full terms and conditions will be published in the November issue of *Official PlayStation Magazine* and more *Tekken 4* info can be found at www.tekken-4.com. Prizes will consist of travel, insurance and accommodation.

namco



PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE - AUSTRALIA



PREVIOUS WINNERS BODYJAR: Pete Annis NSW, G Coppock VIC, K Slade NZ, Ian Merry NSW, Graz Massey NSW, Amanda Thompson VIC, Gareth Dixon SA, Peter Atkins QLD, Bruce Deeks WA, Adam Hewitt NSW, Tim Lee NSW, Jane Laird SA, R Weldon VIC, T Spray VIC, Tianna Rose VIC. **NOONE LIVES FOREVER:** C Squall VIC, Amos Dunstall NSW, B Levy NSW, Ray Hall NZ, Myra Davids VIC, Theo Harley QLD, Chris Wong NSW, Peter Seams NSW, G Sasson NZ, F Pollard NSW, Phil Nash WA, Sam Taylor VIC. **MOOKS:** Hue Bates NZ, Laura Ahern WA. **DOC MARTENS:** Megan Reynolds QLD.

WLTBWA KSPSS407

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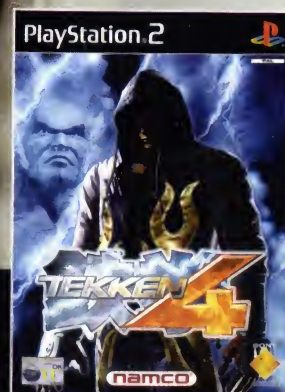
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THE THIRD PLACE
www.tekken-4.com

Razor wins.

namco



Life a battle? Well, here's your chance to settle the score. Take your favourite character, head to the airport, the jungle or even a shopping centre and beat your opponents to a pulp as the crowd goes wild. Got what it takes to be the next King of the Iron Fist Tournament?





NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE



15+ PERSONS UNDER 15 YEARS
MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY
A PARENT OR ADULT GUARDIAN
SEXUAL REFERENCES



From the writers of *Scary Movie* comes the outrageous hit comedy that spoofs nearly every teen movie ever made. Packed with hours of hilarious special features including deleted scenes, audio commentaries, interactive game, Marilyn Manson music video and the crazy original ending.



BRING IT HOME. BRING IT ON.

